This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

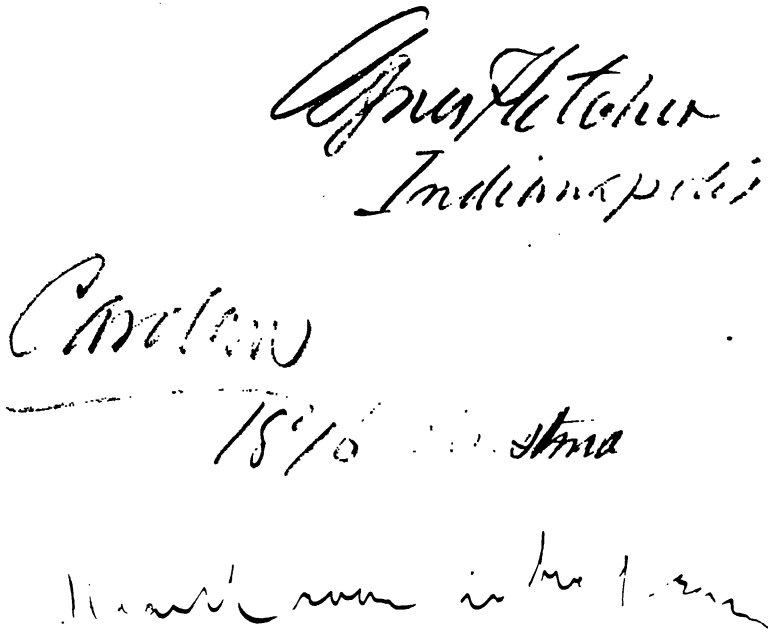
+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`



TROUBADOURS AND TROUVÈRES.

New and Old.

By HARRIET W. PRESTON,

AUTHOR OF "ASPENDALE," "LOVE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY,"
TRANSLATOR OF "MIREIO," ETC.

BOSTON:
ROBERTS BROTHERS.
1876.

PC 3306
P7

Copyright, 1876,
By Roberts Brothers.

Cambridge:
Press of John Wilson & Son.

PREFACE.

THE slight and desultory sketches which follow do not aim at any thing like a complete illustration of the poetry of Provence, whether new or old. I have merely followed, in their preparation and arrangement, the lead of my own awakening interest; and I can only hope that the reader may like to retrace the same rather devious path with me. In pursuing it, I have become extremely interested in the whole subject of the origin and growth of modern versification; of that rhymed and accented poetry in which the finest thought and the most ardent emotion of all the European races has naturally expressed itself for fully a thousand years. When I began to study the versification of Frédéric Mistral's "Mirèio" with a view to translation, I was immediately struck by what

I may call its picturesqueness, the affluence and melody of its rhymes, its variety and marked beauty of rhythm. These qualities I also found in the works of Mistral's brother poets, especially in Aubanel; and they seemed the more remarkable, because for the moment I compared that work only with other modern French poetry, which, ever since the despotic days of Racine and the *Grand Monarque*, has been so particularly colorless, and poor both in rhythm and rhyme. But, in truth, the Provençals had only reclaimed their birthright. Rhymed and accented verse, characterized by the very qualities which make their own and all modern verse most admirable, appears in the Romance poetry of the twelfth century in all the irrecoverable perfection of a first full blossoming. To France and that century also belong the celestial melodies of Adam of Saint Victor and Hildebert of Tours and the monumental hymn of Bernard of Cluny, — three of the greatest masters of the sacred Latin poetry of the Middle Age, — which likewise had become in the main a poetry

of rhyme and accent. And France in those days was England, and England, France; so that all theirs is also, in a peculiar manner, ours. It is, therefore, through the Latin hymns of the mediæval church, that the genealogy is to be traced of those poetic forms which the Troubadours brought to ourselves, and their followers, the Minnesingers, diffused through eastern Europe. But when we have followed this clew as far back as the fourth century and the rhymed hymn of Damasus, Bishop of Rome, on the martyrdom of Saint Agatha, we are stopped by a new wonder. How brief, comparatively, although full of unparalleled revolution and destruction, the interval between the date of this hymn and the time when the only poetry known to Roman, and therefore to any, letters, was that quantitative verse, the structure and the beauties of which, wonderful though they be, are as entirely distinct from those of modern poetry as if it had originated in another planet! Yet the new verse must have had some antecedent. How was the seeming chasm between

the new and the old to be bridged, and continuity established?

It was at this stage of the inquiry that I perceived the impossibility of discussing the question fully in the limits of a preface, which I had once thought to do. I believe, however, that the true reading of the riddle is the one indicated by Dean Trench in the very interesting introduction to his collection of sacred Latin poetry. The quantitative poetry of classic Rome was itself exotic. The rough hexameters of Lucretius, the lovely hexameters of Virgil, the varied measures of Horace, and the elegiacs of Ovid were none of them native growths of the Roman soil. They were transplanted from Greece; they attained in their new home a rapid and graceful, but never robust, growth; and they were, of course, the instruments of the cultured classes only. Under the shadow of this adopted and cultivated poesy, there lived through all the period of its dominion, away in the provinces and among the common people everywhere, an humble growth of popular song

and proverb, which knew nothing of artificial quantities and arbitrary cæsuras, but was simply and often rudely rhymed and accented, after the manner of the poetry which we know best. And when the foreign graces of Roman letters perished with the general collapse of Roman civilization, this lowly, indigenous poetry escaped by its very insignificance, and began to grow. Moreover, to the early Christian writers, the classic measures were all so replete with Pagan associations, that they turned instinctively for the expression of Christian thought and feeling to simpler, more primitive, and, as it seemed to them, less contaminated, forms. And here a question occurs concerning the characteristics of all exotic poetry; that is to say, all poetry, the forms of which are borrowed from a foreign tongue. Has it not its peculiar beauties, as well as its necessary defects? Does the large Latin element in the English language make the native Latin poetical forms more natural and facile to us than they are to the Germans, for example? And does this ac-

count for the undoubted superiority in music of modern English to modern German verse? And, if so, how does it happen that there are so few Latin words in the most musical English poetry, and that our sweetest and most satisfying rhymes are invariably Saxon?

I can conceive no more fascinating subject for patient inquiry and copious illustration than this of the origin and development of modern poetical forms. I have myself a half-formed purpose of sometime devoting to it the volume which it deserves; but, if this purpose is never accomplished, I shall at least cherish the hope that the experiments in metric version, and possibly some of the fragmentary discussions and suggestions in the pages that follow, may be of trifling value to the future historian of modern verse by way of *memoirs pour servir*.

HARRIET W. PRESTON.

BOSTON, Nov. 13, 1876.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
PREFACE	iii
MISTRAL'S CALENDAU	1
THEODORE AUBANEL	43
JACQUES JASMIN. I.	85
JACQUES JASMIN. II.	115
THE SONGS OF THE TROUBADOURS. I.	151
THE SONGS OF THE TROUBADOURS. II.	194
THE ARTHURIAD	232

TROUBADOURS AND TROUVÈRES.

MISTRAL'S CALENDAU.

NINE years after the appearance of *Mirèio*, Frédéric Mistral published simultaneously at Avignon and at Paris, and in parallel Provençal and French, a second poem of heroic proportions, entitled *Calendau*. The critics, who had been quite thrown off their guard by the strangeness and the sweetness, the innocent ardor and frank garrulity, of the earlier poem, were far more wary in their reception of its successor. Their verdict was unanimously and even emphatically favorable; but it was still a verdict, not a startled cry of admiration. Calendau won priceless praise; but it created comparatively no excitement, was not long talked about, and never, we believe, translated.

It is proposed to give some account of this riper and more formal production of M. Mistral's genius, which, if it have not quite the wayward

and fascinating audacity of its elder, does yet give evidence of immense vigor in its author, and of a wealth of imagination sufficiently rare; while it seems to include almost all of legendary and picturesque Provence not portrayed, or at least touched with light, in the previous work.

The reader of Calendau must begin by disabusing himself of the idea that the sensations which he received from Mirèio are to be precisely repeated. Nothing, indeed, is in the nature of things more unlikely than that we shall be twice surprised by the same person, in the same way. The curious *naïveté* of the former tale is abandoned, perhaps deliberately, along with the rather transparent pretence of singing for "shepherds and farmer-folk alone." The usual reading public is addressed in Calendau, and means not wholly unusual are employed to excite and detain our interest.

In the first place, the lovers in Calendau are not children. They are young, indeed, to judge by our slow Northern standards; but they are, to all intents, man and woman, and the lady at least has lived and suffered much when we see her first. Then, it is not a story of to-day, and

there can be no doubt that the romantic charm of Mirèio is perpetually enhanced by the wonder that so artless and idyllic a life as the one there described can be lived anywhere at the present time. The date of Calendau's adventures is placed a hundred years back, and very skilfully. In the dark and desperate times which preceded the outbreak of the first great revolution in France, rapine and bloodshed, flight, treachery, and siege, were matters of frequent occurrence, and the wildest incidents were unhappily probable. Moreover, the shadows of even one century are sufficient to confuse the wavering line between nature and the supernatural, and thus to afford all needful latitude to an imagination which, although capable, as we know, of a most winning playfulness, does yet appear to be essentially sombre. And this introduction of a semi-supernatural element, together with the stress continually laid on the ancient literature and mediæval honors of Provence, impart to Calendau a kind of transitional character, which is far from impairing its interest. The work seems, whether the author intended it or no, almost to bridge the strange chasm between

the old Provençal poetry and the new, and to give an effect of continuity to the unique and brilliant literature of Southern France. And if the fresh realism of Mirèio be not here, and we deem this a little more like ordinary books than the other, that very likeness is also of use sometimes, as affording us a distinct and accurate measure of the poet's own undeniable originality.

He opens his poem conventionally with an allusion to his earlier effort, and in the same metre: —

> I, who sang once the love and sorrow sore
> Of a young maiden, now essay once more —
> God helping me — to tell a tale of love;
> How a poor fisherman of Cassis strove
> And suffered, till he won a shining crown,
> Stainless delights, and honor, and renown.

There follows an invocation to the spirit of Provence, as illustrated in the famous past, and then the opening scene of the story, which is characterized by a suppressed fervor, a kind of silent intensity of light and color and emotion, hardly to be paralleled in English verse: —

> One summer day, from a high mountain seat,
> Rock-built and with the blossoming heather sweet,

Two lovers watched the white caps come and go
Like lambs upon the shining sea below,
While the note only of the woodpecker
Startled the silence of the noontide clear.

Cornice-like hung in air the narrow ledge,
The dark pines thronged beneath; but, from the edge,
One saw the sun-touched faces of the trees
Laugh to the laughter of the Southern seas.
White on the beach gleamed Cassis: far away
Sparkled Toulon, and the blue Gardiole[1] lay

Cloud-like along the deep. So spake the youth
Unto the maiden: "Never, in good sooth,
Did hare or pigeon eager huntsman tire
Like thee! Have I not won at thy desire
Fortune and fame, and wrought all prodigies?
Poor dreamer, whom my dream for ever flies!"

And he goes on to describe, in ardent fashion, the impossibilities he would yet undertake for the sure hope of winning her. The lady answers with tears in her divine eyes, owning for the first time, seemingly, that she loves him, and him alone, but hinting at some insurmountable obstacle to their union. Her lover interrupts her with a burst of impetuous gratitude for her confession: —

[1] *La Garduelo.* A mountain chain bordering on the sea between Cassis and Marseilles.

"Why should not then our joy be perfected?
We love, we are young, we are free as birds!" he said.
"Look! how the glowing nature all around
Lies in the soft arms of the Summer bound,
Courts the endearments of the tawny queen,
And drinks the breath of her dark beauty in!

"The azure peaks, the faint, far hills, lay bare
Their beating bosoms to the radiant air.
The changeful sea below us, clear as glass,
Hinders the ardent sun-rays not to pass
Into its deepest depth; and joys no less
Of Rhone and Var, to feel the mute caress.

"Nay, do not speak! But hark how earth and sea
Have both one language; how exultantly
They tell the passionate need they have of love!
Dost tremble sweet? I bid thy fear remove.
Come, let me lead thee to the altar straight,
Life at its longest is too brief." "Oh, Fate!

"Oh, cruel star!" brake forth the woman's wail.
"Thou must not! Cease, in God's name, lest I fail
To keep my truth."

And after murmuring something of dishonor to an ancient and unstained name, she breaks off with a passionate prayer that the sombre woods and mountain solitudes about her may continue to shelter her, as they have hitherto, from the wrath of her enemies, and the seductions of her own heart. There follows a pict-

ure of the two lovers, without which the reader can hardly form a clear idea of their personality: —

She sprang upon her feet, inspired, erect.
Oh, beauteous was her head! and well bedecked
By its dense coronal of shining hair,
Whereof the twin-coils were as broom-boughs fair
With yellow flower; and from her eye sincere
Storms might have fled, and left the heavens clear.

White were her teeth, as the fine salt of Berre,[1]
And shy, at times, the lofty glances were
Of the proud orbs, whose wondrous hue recalled
The steadfast splendors of the emerald.
And desert sunshine faint reflected shone
In the warm tint her peach-like cheeks upon.

So towered the lithe, tall shape, divinely molded
By the white linen robe her limbs that folded.
While at her knees, her rapt love listening,
As in the blue he heard an angel sing,
Leaned on his elbow with up-gazing eyes.
And he — he too — was made in splendid wise:

With supple limbs, yet strong as sail-yards be
(A score of years, or barely more, had he),
And large eyes sad with love, and black as night;
The down upon his lip was soft and light
As on vine branches.

[1] The salt obtained from the salt-mines of Berre, a small village near Aix, is considered the finest in France.

He renews his suit in the most fervid and persuasive terms; and, when he is again tenderly repulsed, grows keenly reproachful, and hints at toils and sufferings undergone for her sake, which he scorns to dwell upon in detail. Is she a woman, he demands at length, or is she Esterello, the fairy who is said to haunt that mountain region, teasing men with her loveliness, luring them to her pursuit, but always eluding them in the end? And she replies, in sad jest, that she is Esterello; and can never reward, however she may return, any mortal love. Then she invites him to a grotto hard by, where the stalactites weep perpetual pearls.

"And this, my friend," she in her dreamy way,
"Is Esterello's palace! Look, I pray,
At these fair hangings! God himself," said she,
"Wrought all this foliage of white jewelry
The rainfall feeds. Wilt try my leaf couch here?
My only seat, — but heights are ever drear.

"Is it not sweet here? This most quiet spot
The raging heats of summer enter not,
But all is cool." He took the leafy seat;
She dropped upon her knees beside his feet;
And the strange light that flooded all the place
Clothed them, as in one garment, with its rays.

In this becoming attitude the lady tells her true story. She was, by birth, a princess of Baux, the last representative of one of the most ancient and illustrious houses in Provence. In her impoverished orphanhood, — for only the Castle of Aiglun had descended to her out of all the vast possessions of her family, — she had had many suitors, and had fixed her choice upon the least worthy. He was a stranger of brilliant and commanding, but always sinister, appearance, whom, when benighted in a great storm, she had received into her castle, who had described himself to her as Count Severan, an adventurer of high birth, with a large secret following, by the help of which he intended one day to avenge upon a corrupt government the wrongs of their beautiful province, and who had completely subjugated the fancy of the young girl. Their banns were hastily published, and the night of their wedding-feast arrived; but, as the bridegroom presented the guests, one after another, by high-sounding but wholly unfamiliar names, the bride noted with terror that they had more the air of *come* (that is, the overseers of gangs of galley slaves) than of gentlemen. A

scene of furious revelry ensued; but, while the bridegroom was in the midst of a pompous oration, there forced his way into the brilliant hall an unbidden guest.

He stopped midway of his insensate boast;
For in the open doorway rose a ghost,
An old, most miserable, coarse-clad man,
Down whose gaunt cheeks the grimy sweat-drops ran,
The threshold crossed of that high banquet-hall,
And stood, a loathly shape, before us all.

White turned the bridegroom, and a deadly ray
Leaped from his eyes as he the steps would stay
Of the strange comer; but it might not be.
Forward he came silently, solemnly,
As when God takes a beggar's shape sometimes
The rich man to confound amid his crimes.

With slowly-trailing steps he neared the host,
And scanned him long, with lean arms tightly crossed;
Till on the breast of each expectant one,
Great terror fell as with a weight of stone.
An icy wind blew from the night, and flared
The festal lamps, and at last some one dared

To break the silence with a brutal sneer: —
"Ho for a famine, this cursed land to clear
Of beggar vermin! or in four more days
We are devoured!" "What dost thou in this place,
And with this bridal pair, old fool?" they cried.
The insulted stranger not a word replied.

Then some began to jeer his hairless pate,
His bloodshot eyes, and heavy, shambling gait:
"Were it not better, thou ill-omened bird,
To hide thy glum face in thy hole?" He heard,
And still unmurmuring each affront he took,
Yet on the host bent one beseeching look.

But others: "Come, old fellow, these fine folk
Are not worth minding! They must have their joke,
But do thou glean about the board! Make haste,
And snatch a joint or carcass where thou mayst;
Look! Are thy jaws not equal to a chine
Of pork? Or wilt toss off a cup of wine?"

"Nay, masters," answered wearily and slow
The wan intruder; "you'll not tempt me so,
For I want no man's leavings. I am here
To seek my son." "His son? 'Tis mighty queer!
Why, pray, should this old snakeskin vender's son
Be haunting the fine lady of Aiglun?"

There was a base doubt in the mocking look
Of them, which stung, and I could illy brook.
But still they plied him: "Tell us which he is,
This son of thine, and tell the truth in this,
Or from the gargoyle of the highest tower
Of old Aiglun thou'lt dangle in an hour!"

Then the old man: "Behold, I am denied!
Spurned like the sweepings of the floor aside!
Now shall ye hear the raven croak!" quoth he,
And rose up in his rags right awfully.
"Hold!" cried the count, "out with him from the hall!"
Stony his face, and pallid as the wall.

"Fall on him, valets! Hunt the spectral thing!"
Two tears, that I can yet see glistening,
Hot, bitter tears, in aged eyes and weak,
Rose, and rolled down the beggar's furrowed cheek.
Heart-rending memory! Pale as death we grew,
While he took up his broken tale anew.

"I am, like Death," he moaned, "of all forgot!
Yet comes he to the feast, though bidden not.
Oh, ay, and woe is me! I fain once more
Would see my son. He drives me from his door.
'Fall on him! Hunt him!' says he in his ire;
Thou haughty bridegroom, I am still thy sire."

The beggar then turns upon the horrified bride, and denounces his unnatural child to her as a base-born churl, a common robber, a murderer. None dares dispute, or seeks to detain him as he turns to leave the hall, save the lady herself, who, in her first revulsion of feeling, springs forward, calling the old man *father*, and praying him to stay. He puts her aside with a pitying prophecy, and she swoons away. Awaking late in the night, she finds herself in her own chamber, with only her old nurse mourning over her. The castle is still. She collects her thoughts; realizes the ruin that has befallen her life; thanks God that she is, at least, the wife of Severan only in name; and resolves to

fly, leaving her ancestral home in the possession of the banditti below. After long wanderings and many privations, she had made herself a kind of hermitage on this Mount Gibal, at the southern extremity of Provence, where she had ever since lived a mysterious and ascetic life, accounted a supernatural being by the peasantry who caught occasional glimpses of her. Here Calendau, the brave young fisherman from Cassis on the beach below, had long since found and loved, and sought to woo her, although himself regarding her with a kind of superstitious awe. Hence, after the fantastic fashion of the ladies of old, she had sent him forth to deeds of high emprise, which he had achieved one after another; returning to lay his trophies at her feet, and only now, after many such adventures, to learn that his lady returned his love, and to hear her tragic story.

She ceased. As one who from an evil dream
Awakes, Calendau rose, fist clenched, a gleam
Of fury in his eyes. "No longer fear
Thy bandit lord; but think that I am here,
Adore, and will release thee! He or I,
I swear it by the fires of hell, shall die."

But she: "Ah no! Thine eyes affright me more
Than ever he. Go not! Stain not with gore
Our sinless love!" "Nay, but his life must end!"
"Am I not then thy sister, thy sweet friend?
Oh, leave me not!" He answered sullenly,
"I have one only word: *The wretch shall die*, —

"Being a robber and accurst. And, oh!
Thou knowest full well whether I love or no."
"I will no murderer's love! All undefiled
The hand I take must be." He said, and smiled,
"Princess, fear not! This hand hath ne'er a stain,
And white for thy dear sake it shall remain.

"Not as a felon will I seek his death,
But as one brave another challengeth,
I will appease my wrath! Alone, breast bare,
I will go down into the tiger's lair, —
God grant my foot slip not! — and once within
Will smite amid his band this new Mandrin.[1]

"Farewell, my queen!" He said, and made one dash,
Swift as the swamp-fire's gleam, the lightning's flash,
Forth of the grot, then paused. She, at his side,
"Thou goest to thy death!" in anguish cried.
"Cannot love stay thee? Art thou mad to brave
Twenty fierce outlaws in their highland cave?"

[1] Mandrin, a famous brigand chief, was born in 1715, at Sainte-Etienne-de-Geoire, in Dauphiny, and broken on the wheel at Valence, in 1755.

"Yea, were there twenty thousand in their stead,
I would not strike my sail! Behold," he said,
"Love is my strength, — what better following?"
Adown the mount he plunged with valiant spring,
Flung back his vest as the bold Gascons do,
And turned him to far lands and conflicts new.

The third canto opens with a rapid account of Calendau's journey across Provence. It is a series of pictures, each brilliant, distinct, and harmonious in coloring; a lovely panoramic view. M. Mistral had shown himself a master of this kind of painting in those cantos of Mirèio which describe the muster of the farm laborers, and the flight of the heroine across La Crau and Camargue. We cull a stanza here and there.

Afar over the sage-fields hummed the bees,
Fluttered the birds about the sumac-trees.
How lucid was the air of that sweet day!
How fair upon the slopes the shadows lay!
The ranged and pillared rocks seemed to upbear
Levels of green land, like some altar-stair.

O'er the sheer verge the golden pumpkin hung
His heavy head, the rock-born aloes flung
Its flowery rays abroad like God's own lustre.
Deep in the dells, full many a coral cluster
The barberry ripened. The pomegranate red
Reared like an Indian cock its crested head.

As Calendau drew near his lady's ancestral home, he asked of all he met the way to the Castle of Aiglun.

"O cheery plowman, in thy furrow toiling,
O merry pitch-man, thy sweet resin boiling,
How far from this to old Aiglun?" he cried.
"Climb, gallant, climb!" the laborers replied;
"Then down the deepest chasm, if so be
The horrid heights no terror have for thee."

So he went down the deep, chill, darksome vale.
The frowning precipice well-nigh made fail
Even his high heart. There the unwilling day
On snake and lizard flings one noontide ray,
Then hides behind the cliff. The gorge along
Tumbles in foam the angry Esteron.

Presently, however, the defile widened; giving to view an open space, where Calendau came suddenly upon the self-styled count himself, surrounded by some thirty or forty of his followers, both men and women. The outlaws were reposing after the fatigues of the chase, and taking their noonday lunch upon the sunlit turf. The intruder is of course ordered to stand and deliver; but his beauty attracts the women, and his boldness the men. The count

himself sees in the audacious stranger a possible recruit; and the end of it all is that he is invited to share their repast, on condition that he will tell his story, and declare his business there. Calendau asked no better. His tale, he says, is one of love, and of many labors wrought in the hope of rendering himself worthy of his lady's distinguished favor. Some say that lady is a fairy, Esterello by name; and it is certain that she lives alone in a wild solitude, that her beauty is more than human, and her thoughts and visions too high for earth. At all events, he will call her Esterello.

The next six cantos are occupied chiefly with Calendau's recital of his own exploits. After each feat performed, he seeks his lady in her retreat, but finds her for a time ever harder and harder to win. The strenuous and often rude action of the hero's narrative is beautifully broken and relieved by the moonlight quiet and mystery of these scenes upon the mountain. Other themes are also introduced, which both lighten the monotony of grotesque or stern adventure, and assist in preserving the continuity of the main story: the irrepressible comments

of Calendau's listeners; the wonder and sometimes incredulity of the men; the sentimental admiration of the women; and, on the part of Severan himself, the secret suspicion, early aroused and constantly strengthened, that Calendau's austere and angelic lady-love is none other than his own fugitive bride, of whom he had never been able to obtain a trace. He chooses, however, to allow the young enthusiast to finish his tale, both that he may become possessed of the fullest possible information, and also that he may have time to mature some perfectly effectual plan of vengeance on the two.

Calendau begins by telling them that his own birth was humble. He came of honest and thrifty fisherfolk from Cassis, on the Mediterranean coast, and he cannot help lingering lovingly over some of the details of his simple early life.

> "I would you once had seen the goodly sight,
> The Cassis men under the evening light!
> And in the cool, when they put out to sea,
> Hundreds of fishing craft go silently
> And lightly forth, like a great flock of plover,
> And spread abroad the heaving billows over.

"And the wives linger in the lone doorways,
Watching, with what a long and serious gaze!
For the last glimmer of the swelling sail.
And if the sea but freshen, they turn pale;
For well they know how treacherous he is,
That cruel deep, — for all his flatteries.

. . . . . .

"But when the salt sea thunders with the shocks
Of rude assault from the great equinox,
And bits of foundered craft bestrew the shores,
Then can we naught but close our cottage doors,
And young and old about the warm fireside
Wait the returning of the summer-tide.

"Ah! those were evenings, — when the autumn gales
Blew loud, and mother mended the rent sails
With homespun thread; ay, and we youngsters too
Were set to drive the needle through and through
The gaping nets, and tie the meshes all
There where they hung suspended on the wall.

"And in his tall chair by the ingle nook
My father sat, with aye some antique book
Laid reverently open on his knee.
And 'Listen, and forget the rain,' quoth he,
Blew back his mark, and read some tale divine
Of old Provençal days, by the fire-shine."

But Calendau asks pardon for dwelling on these scenes of childhood. Manhood had begun for him when he met his lady in the forest. He

had first thought to win her with gold, and had undertaken to make himself rich by the difficult and dangerous tunny-fishing of the Mediterranean coast, in which immense fortunes are sometimes made. The fifth canto of the poem, *La Madrago*, describes this exciting sport. The sketch is one of great power, and has a kind of restless brilliancy. Many local legends and wild superstitions of the coast are introduced; yet it is intensely real. We give the passage which describes Calendau's crowning success: —

"But when with dawn the pallid moon had set,
The whole unnumbered shoal into the net
Came pouring. Ah, but then I was elate!
Drunk with my joy, thought I had conquered fate;
'Now, love,' I said, 'thou shalt have gems and gems;
I'll spoil the goldsmiths for thy diadems!'

"Love is the sun, the king of all this earth:
He fires, unites, fulfils with joy, gives birth,
Calls from the dead the living by the score,
And kindles war, and doth sweet peace restore.
Lord of the land, lord of the deep, is he,
Piercing the very monsters of the sea

"With fire-tipped arrows. Lo the tunny yon!
Now in one silver phalanx press they on;

Anon they petulantly part and spring,
And plunge and toss; their armor glittering
Steel-blue upon their crystal field of fight,
Or rosy underneath the growing light.

"'Twas nuptial bliss they sought. What haste! What fire!
With the strong rush of amorous desire
Spots of intense vermilion went and came
On some, like sparkles of a restless flame,
A royal scarf, a livery of gold,
A wedding robe, fading as love grew cold.
. . . . . .

"So at the last came one prodigious swell;
And the last line, that seemed invincible,
Brake with the pressure, and our boats leaped high.
'Huzza! the prey is caged!' we wildly cry;
'Courage, my lads, and don't forget the oil!
The fish we have, —let not the dressing spoil!

"'Bout ship!' We bent our shoulders with a will;
Our oars we planted sturdily but still;
And the gay cohort, late alive with light,
Owned, with a swift despair, its prisoned plight;
And, where it leaped with amorous content,
Quivered and plunged in fury impotent.

"'Now then, draw in! But easy, comrades bold;
We are not gathering figs!'[1] And all laid hold

[1] *Eico n'es pas de figo bourjassoto.* A popular proverb signifying "It is no trivial matter." The *bourjassoto* is a species of black fig.

With tug and strain to land the living prize,
Fruit of the treacherous sea. In ecstasies
Of rage our victims on each other flew,
Dashing the fishers o'er with bitter dew.

"Too like, too like our own unhappy people,
Who, when the tocsin clangs from tower and steeple
Peril to freedom and the land we cherish,
Insensate turn like those foredoomed to perish,
Brother on brother laying reckless hand,
Till comes a foreign lord to still the land.

"Yet had we brave and splendid sport, I ween;
For some with tridents, some with lances keen,
Fell on the prey. And some were skilled to fling
A wingèd dart held by a slender string.
The wounded wretches 'neath the wave withdrew,
Trailing red lines along the mirror blue.

"Slowly the net brimful of treasure mounted;
Silver was there, turquoise and gold uncounted,
Rubies and emeralds million-rayed. The men
Flung them thereon like eager children when
They stay their mother's footsteps to explore
Her apron bursting with its summer store

"Of apricots and cherries."

The wealth thus suddenly acquired, Calendau spends with ostentatious profusion. He appoints a *fête* at Cassis, to be celebrated with public games, boat-racing, and trials of strength,

and promises largess to the crowd. He then buys the costliest trinkets, fit only for a queen's casket, and proceeds to offer them to his Esterello, by whom they are refused with a sort of gentle disdain. She reminds him that she has no further use for jewelry; and that the field flowers are, for her, a far more appropriate garniture; and she reproves his shallow confidence and youthful vanity. Still further mortification awaits him at the Cassis *fête*, to which the next canto is devoted, and where he had anticipated a public ovation; but where certain comrades, who are jealous of his prosperity, overcome him by treachery in the games, and poison the minds of his townsfolk against him. Wounded and sore, both in body and mind, he repairs again to his fair recluse, and this time she is kinder.

"I came once more unto my lady's eyrie,
Heart hot with sense of wrong and limbs a-weary,
And oh, the rest I found there, and the balm!
Coolness as of clear water, and a calm
Celestial. 'Oh entreat me pityingly,
My strange white Fay,' I said; 'no gems have I

"'For thee to-day. One only laurel-bough,
Thick set with thorns, is all I offer now;'

And so I dropped under the shady trees,
And told her of my hard-won victories —
All barren — and my shame; and she, grave-eyed,
Looked up and listened from the grass beside."

Then she tells him a thrilling story, or rather chants him a ballad, out of that legendary lore of Provence with which her memory is stored, and on which, in her solitude, her imagination is ever brooding. We give it entire: —

At Arles, in the Carlovingian days,
By the swift Rhône water,
A hundred thousand on either side,
Christian and Saracen fought till the tide
Ran red with the slaughter.

May God forefend such another flood
Of direful war!
The Count of Orange, on that black morn,
By seven great kings was overborne,
And fled afar,

Whenas he would avenge the death
Of his nephew slain.
Now are the kings upon his trail;
He slays as he flies; like fiery hail
His sword-strokes rain.

He hies him into the Aliscamp,[1]
No shelter there!
A Moorish hive is the home of the dead;
And hard he spurs his goodly steed
In his despair.

Over the mountain and over the moor,
Flies Count Guillaume;
By sun and by moon he ever sees
The coming cloud of his enemies;
Thus gains his home,

Halts, and lifts at the castle gate
A mighty cry,
Calling his haughty wife by name:
"Guibour, Guibour, my gentle dame,
Open! 'Tis I!

"Open the gate to thy Guillaume.
Ta'en is the city
By thirty thousand Saracen,
Lo! they are hunting me to my den.
Guibour, have pity!"

But the countess from the rampart cried:
"Nay, chevalier,
I will not open my gates to thee;
For, save the women and babes," said she,
"Whom I shelter here,

[1] The Aliscamp; that is, *Elysii Campi*, — an ancient cemetery near Arles, supposed to have been consecrated by Christ in person.

"And the priest who keeps the lamps alight,
Alone am I.
My brave Guillaume and his barons all
Are fighting the Moor by the Aliscamp wall,
And scorn to fly!"

"Guibour, Guibour, it is I myself!
And those men of mine
(God rest their souls!) they are dead," he cried,
"Or rowing with slaves on the salt sea-tide.
I have seen the shine

"Of Arles on fire in the dying day;
I have heard one shriek
Go up from all the arenas where
The nuns disfigure their bodies fair,
Lest the Marran wreak

"His brutal will. Avignon's self
Will fall to-day!
Sweetheart, I faint; oh, let me in
Before the savage Mograbin
Fall on his prey!"

"I swear thou liest," cried Guibour,
"Thou base deceiver!
Thou art perchance thyself a Moor
Who whinest thus outside my door, —
My Guillaume, never!

"Guillaume to look on burning towns,
And fired by — *thee!*
Guillaume to see his comrades die,
Or borne to sore captivity,
And then to *flee!*

"He knows not flight! He is a tower
Where others fly!
The heathen spoiler's doom is sure,
The virgin's honor aye secure,
When he is by!"

Guillaume leapt up, his bridle set
Between his teeth,
While tears of love, and tears of shame,
Under his burning eyelids came,
And hard drew breath,

And seized his sword, and plunged his spurs
Right deep, and so
A storm, a demon, did descend
To roar and smite, to rout and rend,
The Moorish foe.

As when one shakes an almond-tree,
The heathen slain
Upon the tender grass fall thick,
Until the flying remnant seek
Their ships again.

Four kings with his own hand he slew,
And when once more
He turned him homeward from the fight,
Upon the drawbridge long in sight
Stood brave Guibour.

"By the great gateway enter in,
My Lord!" she cried,
And might no further welcome speak,
But loosed his helm, and kissed his cheek,
With tears of pride.

The docile Calendau goes on his way inspired and heartened. His next feat is to scale Ventour, the most precipitous peak in Provence, hitherto considered inaccessible; and he signalizes his achievement by felling a grove of larches on the very crest of the mountain. The difficult ascent is very graphically described: —

"Savage at once and sheer, yon tower of rocks;
To tufts of lavender and roots of box
I needs must cling; and as my feet I ground
In the thin soil, the little stones would bound
With ringing cry from off the precipice,
And plunge in horror down the long abyss.

"Sometimes my path along the mountain face
Would narrow to a thread: I must retrace
My steps and seek some longer, wearier way.
And if I had turned dizzy in that day,
Or storm had overtaken me, then sure
I had lain mangled at thy feet, Ventour.

"But God preserved me. Rarely as I strove
With only death in view, I heard above
Some solitary sky-lark wing her flight
Afar, then all was still. Only by night
God visits these drear places. Cheery hum
Of insect rings there never. All is dumb.

"Oft as the skeleton of some old yew,
In a deep chasm, caught my downward view,

'Thou art there!' I cried; and straightway did discover
New realms of wood towering the others over,
A deeper depth of shadows. Ah, methought
Those were enchanted solitudes I sought!

"From sun to sun I clambered, clinging fast
Till all my nails were broken. At the last—
The utter last, oh palms of God!—I caught
The soft larch-murmur near me, and, distraught,
Embraced the foremost trunk, and forward fell,
How broken, drenched, and dead, no words can tell!

"But sleep renews. I slept; and with the dawn
A fresh wind blew, and all the pain was gone,
And I rose up both stout of limb and glad;
Bread in my sack for nine full days I had,
A drinking-flask, a hatchet, and a knife
Wherewith to carve the story of my strife

"Upon the trunks. Ah! fine that early breeze
On old Ventour, rushing through all the trees!
A symphony sublime I seemed to hear,
Where all the hills and vales gave answer clear,
Harmonious. In a stately melancholy
From the sun's cheerful glances hidden wholly

"By the black raiment of their foliage
The larches rose. No tempest's utmost rage
Could shake them; but, with huge limbs close entwined,
Mutely they turned their faces to the wind;
Some hoar with mould and moss, while some lay prone
Shrouded in the dead leaves of years agone.

"A sudden fear assailed my spirit bold:
'O kingly trees!' I cried; 'O hermits old!
All hail, and pardon! And thou too, Ventour,
Long steeled the tempest's torment to endure,
Wilt thou not howl in all thy caves to-day
Because thy stately crown is rent away?'

"But now the deed is done, the battle dared.
Mightily swings the axe, and rent and scared
Are the millennial slumbers of the place
Mightily cleaves the iron relentless ways
Along the wood, and every resinous scale
Weeps drops of gold; but these shall not avail

"To stay the slaughter. A heart-rending shriek
Springs, as the great trunk parts, from root to peak;
From bough to bough quivers a dying groan,
As falls the monarch headlong from his throne,
And thunders down the vale, spreading about
Tumult and din, as of a water-spout."

Not content with the havoc thus wrought in the forest solitudes, and the consternation excited in the valley below, and heedless even of the blandishments of a certain lady of Maltbrun, who desires to regale and refresh him in her highland castle after his exploit, Calendau next assails what is called the Honeycomb-rock, — a series of clefts and fissures where the mountain bees have been for ages depositing their honey

undisturbed,—and barely escapes with his life from the consequences of this last piece of bravado. But when he approaches Esterello once more, bearing a larch bough and a slice of honeycomb as his trophies, he finds her rather amused than overawed by his latest achievement. She cannot help praising his prowess, and half relenting to his fantastic fidelity; but she declares her fervent and somewhat mystical belief, that the solitudes of Nature are sacred, and that he who wantonly invades and violates them deserves a severe punishment. She reminds him once more that her beloved heroes of old fought to redress human wrong, and mitigate human suffering, and tries to awaken him to a higher ideal of life and love. Count Severan can hardly restrain himself at this stage of the story.

" 'Go then in peace,' she said, 'and if one day
A man and knight indeed thou com'st my way,
Then,'—with a sudden smile,—'then I will tell
Whether I found thy honey sweet!' Ah well,
Bright seemed the word, and kind, and the day bright,
And the birds sang, and the stream leapt in light.

" 'So, at the last, thou hadst her?' Severan
Burst forth. 'Thy tale is growing tedious, man.'

'Pardon, my gracious lord!' Calendau cried,
'And deign a little longer to abide;
'Twere base to cheat your honor of the rest,
Seeing my story's end will be its best!'"

In the eighth canto, Calendau signalizes his devotion to a loftier ambition, by interposing between two hostile bands of freemasons, whom he finds one day engaged in a fierce and sanguinary fight; and, finally, by common consent of the parties, arbitrating and restoring peace among them. The theme hardly seems a very poetic one, but it is treated with the dignity which never forsakes Mistral; a deal of strange and sombre history, or rather mythology, is introduced, and the rival claims and *bizarre* pretensions of the children of Hiram and Solomon are detailed with a certain weird pomp. Again Severan interrupts Calendau's narrative fiercely and scornfully, and with a wrathful side-glance at the listeners who hang upon his lips.

"At least they named thee their Grand Chief, I hope,
Their master, king, — whate'er they call it, — pope,"
Hissed Severan. "Nay," was the tranquil word,
"Nor pope, nor king, nor general; but, my lord,
Provence and Aquitaine, do not forget,
Will one day give me a name nobler yet, —

"'*He who won Esterello.*'" "Oh, have done!"
The huntresses 'gan clamor, all as one;
"Nor look that look that freezes all our blood!"
For now, with lifted eyes the hero stood,
And sweet and misty was their gaze afar,
Like his who sees a vision or a star.

And now Calendau goes on to relate how he addressed himself to the most perilous and unselfish of all his undertakings; the achievement of which brings the reader to the commencement of the story. There was a certain brigand named Marco Mau, the pest and terror of all southern Provence, much as Severan himself was of the north. No hearth or home or sanctuary, or life of man or chastity of woman, was safe from the violent assaults of this ruffian and his armed band; and him Calendau, at the head of a small picked company, tracked, defied, besieged in his stronghold, and finally slew. Of course, he won the enthusiastic gratitude of his towns-people and countrymen in general, and they became eager to make amends for all the petty jealousies of the past, and whatever injustice they had previously done him. In the great city of Aix he was received like a prince, and rare civic honors were bestowed upon him. And

when he enters the lists at the Fête-Dieu, and is proclaimed victor in one after another of the strange, antique games which characterize that festival, the enthusiasm of the people mounts to the highest pitch, and Calendau himself is filled with a sacred joy and gratitude, as unlike as possible to the vain exultation of his earlier days. He knows that his present honors and popularity have been well won, by hard and beneficent service, and he thinks his Esterello must approve him at the last. We are now at the crisis of the story, and the interest deepens rapidly.

"What maudlin tales these foreigners do spin!
Is it not supper-time?" once more brake in
Count Severan. "Come hurry to the end!
For whither, boaster, does thy prowess tend?
Thou hast not won her yet! So much I know, —
And others will yet reap where thou didst sow!"

"'Will reap!' What mean you, scoundrel? storm and war!"
Cried the young fisher, in tones louder far
Than e'en the bandit's, and more awesome still;
"But I *have* won her! Laugh or weep who will!
My plume is flying free, and I can guide
Full well the stormy clouds whereon I ride!

"I would that you had seen my lady bright,
As once again I climbed her balmy height.
'To-day they named me Chief of Youth,' I said.
Flamed in her cheeks two roses of deep red,
And her throat swelled, and in her glorious eyes
I saw the lucent, loving tears arise.

"Ay, and I drank those tears! And from that hour, —
Whether it be yon nectar's wondrous power,
I know not, — but my doubts, my fears, are dead.
The flowers bloom, look you, wheresoe'er I tread;
And wheresoe'er I turn my blessèd vision,
The land is all one scene of peace Elysian.

"The sky seems vaster than it did of old;
And I can hear the concords manifold
In Nature's varying voices. And I know
Why the winds cry aloud or whisper low;
Why strives the angry sea, and by what token,
Weary and sad, retires with pride all broken.

"For, hearken what she said, this queen of mine:
'Now is my soul, Calendau, wholly thine,
Only my body must I keep mine own;
But thee I love, my knight, and thee alone!
'Twere sweet, — and why stay I my steps like this,
Nor rush with open arms to utmost bliss?

"'Now shalt thou know! A treacherous bond,' cried she,
'And yet invincible, constraineth me:
I am an outlaw's wife.'" "Ho! not so fast!"
The huntsmen jeered. "The rocket bursts at last
But the poor women trembled where they sate,
Yearning o'er him who thus had sealed his fate.

While he — Calendau — cast his cap aside,
Leapt up, "And that same impious bond," he cried,
"By the good grace of God, I break to-day!
Yet if I fall, let not my slayer say
I am abased; for what I have, I ween,
Is bliss enough, — an ocean deep, serene,

"As heaven itself! E'en Death shall powerless prove,
And break his horns against our mighty love.
Fair as the day my lady's body is,
And yet the whitest pearl of rich Ganges
A boar may swallow. She I dare call mine
Is but the angel whom that pearl doth shrine.

"The low, the evanescent love of sense
Is but a madness: it has long gone hence.
I love my sister's soul, and enter there,
And come and go, and all I see is fair.
Oh, never painter lived who could retrace,
Even in symbol, that angelic grace!

"O ye unspeakable joys of the spirit,
Ye are the paradise true souls inherit!
Ye are indeed the purifying fires
Wherein love loseth all its low desires.
O oneness wonderful! Accord complete,
Tender and piercing, sad because so sweet!

"Death shall erelong to marble turn our frames;
But the twin thought of us, the inseparate flames
Of divine essence, by the self-same road
Shall journey to the Infinite of God!
The one adored, the one who doth adore,
Giving and taking blessing evermore."

Thus the enraptured youth, like the brave sower
Who goes forth full of hope the rude fields o'er,
And sows broadcast, on all the stony plain
And hard, his sacred and life-giving grain.
Large drops his forehead beaded; but his smile
With faith was radiant and content the while.

And they who heard him dumbly felt a thrill,
Born of that zeal divine, unwonted steal
Through all their frames, and hearkened eagerly
As the mule pricks his ears when he sees fly
The sparks from off the anvil. But the view
Of that clear river of love, for ever new,

Incapable of stain, marriage of soul
Made but for heaven, that smiles at Death's control,
Stirred to its utmost spite one felon heart;
And scowling Severan, where he sat apart,
While hate burned like a blister at his breast,
Brooded revenge with feverish unrest;

Yet held, as with a leash, his passions in,
Muzzled like ravening dogs, until his spleen
Took shape. "Calendau hath won all things now,
The aureole is growing round his brow;"
So his thought ran. "Of heaven he is sure,
And there of honor bright and favor pure.

"He hath her soul! He is become as God!
Now, though the lightning lay its fiery rod
Upon him, and his frame be ground to dust,
He is not dispossessed of that fair trust:
He hath her soul, and what to him is death?
Ha! ha! I'll break the sword and leave the sheath!

"By the insidious poison of a bliss
More deadly than all pain, that soul of his
I will make one corruption! Ay, the germ
Of yonder tree of life shall feed the worm!
And were thy baser passions tighter reined
Than now, proud youth, thy doom were still ordained."

With this infernal thought the count arose,
Blandly a signal gave, and all of those
About set forth together for Aiglun,
Climbing the tortuous torrent-side. The sun
Set suddenly behind the mountain-wall,
And swift and sombre 'gan the night to fall.

Till from the east the early moon did peep,
As a maid, risen from her couch of sleep,
Her lattice opes, the coolness to inhale.
The crickets chirred incessant in the vale;
And, where the onion-fields lay black in shade,
The courtil-mole trilled forth her long roulade.

Rarely from far above the piercing cry
Of some belated quail fell mournfully,
Or a young partridge in the vale astray
Whimpered afar. And cooler grew alway
The air, until the deep'ning shades of night
Were cloven by the bat's precipitous flight.

The eleventh canto, The Orgie, is devoted to the fulfilment of Severan's sinister design, and it reveals a wholly new aspect of M. Mistral's versatile genius. The inconceivable luxury of

the bandit's castle, the costly profusion of the garden feast, the music, the tempered light, the heavy odors, and the artfully intensified beauty of the women, whom Calendau seemed hardly to have heeded before, — are all described in diction infinitely voluptuous, and with an effect of sensuous splendor and enchantment hardly attainable in a Northern tongue. The revelry, restrained at first to a certain languorous measure, grows faster, while from time to time the lurid scene is relieved by glimpses of the summer night scenery, with what effect those will readily understand who remember the peaceful light of sunset sky and sea around the fierce duel of the rivals in Mirèio.

There were swift clouds abroad that night, and dark,
Hiding the moon at times. The restless spark
Of myriad fire-flies, like an emerald shower,
Quivered in all the air. And hour by hour
Warmer the night turned, and heat lightnings parted
From the far heights, and through the ether darted.

And if the mad mirth failed, at intervals
Sounded distinctly all the waterfalls
And tinkling fountains; and anon there came
Dashes of cooling spray to cheeks aflame.
For a cascade that plunged adown the hill,
By art compelled, with many a silver rill

Threaded the pleasance; seeming now asleep,
Then, hurrying to a verge, with one gay leap,
Dispersed in diamond rain, it passed from view.
Only the grass below right verdant grew,
And loveliest flowers, jasmine and the tuberose,
Freighted the dark with sweets, — how sweet to those

Hot revellers! And the cantharides
Shook their keen odors from the great ash-trees.
At last the host: "And are ye satisfied
With feasting? Ho then for a dance!" he cried.
"Young, rosy limbs in play I hold a sight
Aye worth the rapture of a gallant knight."

There followed one of those intoxicating and lascivious dances indigenous in the neighborhood of Marseilles, and parent of the Carmagnole and more modern abominations. In the midst of it, Calendau finally shakes off his gathering stupor, and challenges Severan to instant and mortal combat. A scene of frightful confusion ensues; but the struggle is, of course, a brief one: Calendau is overpowered by numbers, bound, and flung into a dungeon, and his torture exquisitely enhanced by the assurance that Severan and his troop, following the clue furnished by Calendau's story, will set forth that very night to capture and bring back, alive or dead, the lost lady of Aiglun. From this dun-

geon he is released, at early daybreak, by Fortuneto, the youngest, fairest, and tenderest of the unhappy slaves whose allurements he had resisted the night before, and he flies to the defence of his lady. He is only just in season. The "cornice-like ledge," where we saw them first, forms a kind of natural fortress; and there the young lover, informed with the valor of ten, holds the troop at bay for one long twenty-four hours, and at last disables so many that they retreat, but only to set fire to the woods that girdle the mountain. A terrible night ensues, during which the two can do no more than wait for death together; but, when the first rays of dawn are struggling with the lurid flames and stifling smoke, the bells are suddenly heard to ring in Cassis and all along the shore. The rumor has spread that Calendau, the darling and benefactor of the coast, is in uttermost peril; and the whole population turns out to fight the flames. The strange battle is made sufficiently thrilling and dubious, although the reader foreknows its end. Severan is killed by the fall of a burning trunk, and —

> Two thousand souls, a people in its might,
> Engage the roaring fires in sturdy fight,

Felling a pathway to the mountain-crest,
Just as the sun leaps up to flood the east
With radiance; and the child of yonder wave
And the white fairy of the highland cave—

He with his nostrils wide to the pure morn,
She with the torrent of her bright hair borne
Downward, like jujube flowers — stand forth together,
The glory of the blue bejewelled weather
Flung like an arch triumphal o'er the twain.
Hand in hand on the height they hear again

And yet again exultant shouts ascending—
Two thousand voices in one pæan blending—
"Hail to Calendau! who hath brought renown
And praise of men to our poor fishing-town!
Who hath won Esterello! Plant the may
For him who is our consul from to-day!"

The happy crowd therewith in triumph bear
Forth of their citadel the rescued pair,
The tried, the true, the blest beyond desire;
While the sun, which is God's own realm of fire,
Goes up his dazzling way with blessing rife,
Calling new lovers and new loves to life.

So happily ends the poem. The brief abstract here given conveys a very inadequate idea of the abundance of incident, the range of tone, and the immense variety of action by which it is characterized. Where nearly every page is strikingly picturesque, selection becomes a difficult task.

THEODORE AUBANEL: A MODERN PROVENÇAL POET.

THE ideal Mutual Admiration Society has its head-quarters in the south of France. Such clumsy endorsements as people with a common literary cause elsewhere afford one another are contemptible indeed beside the fervent felicitations, the ascriptions of honor, the prayers for a common immortality, the vows of eternal faith and mutual self-abasement, to which the *Felibres* of the *Bouches-du-Rhône* are treated among themselves. The *felibres* are the whole school of modern Provençal poets of which Joseph Roumanille is founder and master, and Frédéric Mistral *facile princeps;* and no Gentile seems to know precisely why they are called or call themselves by this name. The very etymology of the word is disputed; some asserting that it means merely *qui facit libros*, others that it is *homme de foi libre*, and that the word, from being applied to the apostles in ancient prayers,

has been adopted by the apostles of the Provençal revival, as indicating the breadth of their own views, and the novelty — if the word may be pardoned — of their literary and perhaps political *departure*. It should be said, however, that this last is not the explanation of a friend, but of a deserter, M. Eugene Garcin, who is the author of a very curious and not very amiable little book entitled, "Les Français du Nord et du Midi," and whom M. Mistral himself does not hesitate to call "The Judas of our little church." The etymology is not perhaps of very much account. These men are self-styled *felibres;* and the *felibre* Anselme Matthieu sings to the *felibre* Joseph Roumanille, and the *felibre* Theodore Aubanel to the *felibre* Jan Brunet, and all together, as well they may, hymn the praises of M. Mistral, who, in his turn, invokes them all (and the faithless Garcin among them), like a choir of masculine Muses, in the fifth canto of Mirèio; while to one of them, Theodore Aubanel, who forms the subject of this article, and who undoubtedly ranks next to Mistral in originality and beauty of gifts, the latter has furnished a more formal and very characteristic

introduction to the world. Nor, with the glowing pages before me of Mistral's fanciful preface to Aubanel's poems, can I bring myself to preface the versions which I have made from the less famous minstrel by any dry record of the few known facts of his history. I prefer to let the one poet present the other, as he did to the French public, and must beg the kindly reader to regard this new candidate for favor, and his sad and simple story, less through the dim medium of my own translations than by the rose-light of the generous praises of his enthusiastic superior. Aubanel's book is called "La Miougrano Entredouberto: The Opening — or Half Open — Pomegranate." The coincidence of the name with that of one of Browning's early volumes, and of Mistral's interpretation of it with Miss Barrett's of the latter, is a little singular. This is the *Avant-propos.*

I.

"The pomegranate is by nature wilder than other trees; it loves to grow in the broad sunshine among heaps of stones, afar from men and near to God. There, solitary as a hermit and brown

with the sun, it shyly unfolds its blood-red flowers. Love and sunlight fertilize the blossoms, and in their rosy cups mature a thousand coral seeds, a thousand pretty sisters nestling under the same coverlet.

"The swollen pomegranate keeps concealed, as long as may be, under its rind the beautiful, rosy grains, — the beautiful, bashful sisters. But the wild birds of the oak-barrens cry to the pomegranate-tree, 'What wilt thou do with thy seeds? Autumn and winter will soon be here to drive us across the hills and over the sea. Shall it be said, thou wild pomegranate-tree, that we left Provence without seeing the birth of thy coral seeds, the eyes of thy bashful daughters?'

"Then the pomegranate-tree, to satisfy the eager birds, slowly opens its fruit. The vermilion grains flash in the sun; the timid girls with their rosy cheeks peep out of the window. The giddy birds assemble in flocks and gayly feast upon the fair coral seeds; the giddy suitors devour with kisses the fair, bashful maidens."

II.

"Theodore Aubanel — and when you have read his book you will say the same — is a wild pomegranate-tree. The Provençal public, which liked his earliest songs so well, has been saying of late, 'What is our Aubanel doing, that we no longer hear his voice?'

"Aubanel was singing in secret. Love, that sacred bee whose honey is so sweet in its own time and place, and which, when crossed, can sting so sharply, — love had buried in his heart a keen and pitiless arrow. The unhappy passion of our friend was hopeless; his malady without remedy. His beloved, the maiden who had crossed the clear heaven of his youth, — alas, she had become a nun!

"The poor soul wept seven years for his lady and is not yet consoled.

"To drive away the fever which consumed him, he left Avignon, committing himself to God. He saw Rome; he saw Paris; with the barb still in his side, he came back to Provence. He climbed mountains — Sainte Baume, Ventour, the Alps, the Alpilles. But his rose had

shed its leaves; thorns only remained, and none might strip them off."

III.

"Nevertheless, from time to time the swellings of his passion overflowed in poesy. He had taken for his motto, —

"'Quau canto
Soun mau encanto.'[1]

And whenever he felt a stab of regret the poor child gave a cry.

"And these plaints, these cries of love, at the earnest instance of us his friends, — the birds of the oak-barrens, — Theodore Aubanel has consented to publish under the charming title of the 'Book of Love.'

"The 'Book of Love' is thus, strange to say, a song in good faith, a genuine flame. The story, as I have said, is perfectly simple. It is that of a youth who loves, who languishes afar from his beloved, who suffers, who weeps, who makes his moan to God. Holding his story sacred, he has not changed it. All is here as it happened,

[1] He who sings *enchants* or charms away his sorrow.

or better than so, for from his virgin passion, his weariness and despondency, his weeping and his cries, a book all nature has arisen, — living, youthful, exquisite."

IV.

"If ever in April you have passed along the hedge-rows, you know the odor of the hawthorn. It is both sweet and bitter.

"If ever in early May you have scented the evening coolness under the light green trees, you know the song of the nightingale. It is clear and vivid, impassioned and pure, plaintive but full of power.

"If ever in June you have seen the sun set from the ramparts of Avignon, you know how the Rhone shines under the old bridge of Saint Bénézet. It is like the mantle of a prince, red and radiant, torn with lances, — it floats, it flames.

"I can think of no better comparison for the 'Book of Love.' Nor do I think it too much to say that the coral seeds of the opening pomegranate will henceforth be the lover's chaplet in Provence."

V.

"After the 'Book of Love' comes the 'Intergleam.'

"It is quite natural. If you have a hedge of roses, lilacs, or myrtle, it is hardly possible but that it should be interspersed with shoots of blackthorn, periwinkle, and honeysuckle. And observe the sea, when it is beaten and churned and tormented by the north-wind; there will be found, amid the tumultuous billows, bright ripples which reflect the sun.

"So, amid the impassioned love-songs of Theodore Aubanel, there are a few pleasant, peaceful, consoling strains. So in the tempest of his emotions there are transient gleams of fair weather.

"Truly the lucid interval is short. But the more severe the attack, the more vigorous the reaction. The strain is broken; or at least the young man believes for an instant that it is so, and lo, with what ardor he drinks at the cool springs of serene, majestic Nature! He quaffs the sunshine like a lizard; his nostrils expand to the soft breathings of the forest airs.

Does he sing of reapers? He seems himself to grasp the sickle. Of fishermen? 'T is he who flings the net. And if he celebrates nuptials, he fairly leaps with joy. You would say that he was himself the bridegroom."

VI.

"But the lightning of the storm-cloud is only temporary. The trouble of the heart again makes darkness in the soul.

"When Raimbaud de Vacqueiras was so madly enamoured of Beatrix, the sister of Marquis Boniface de Montferrat, and dared not tell her so, this is the song which he made in his despair: —

"'No m'agrad iverns ni pascors
Ni clar tèms, ni folh de garrics;
Car mos enans mi par destrics
E totz miei major gautz dolors;
E son maltrach tut mièi legèr
E desesperat mièi espèr;
Qu' aissi m' sol amor e domnèis
Tener gai coma l'aiga l' pèis:
E pois d'amdui me soi partitz
Com hom eissilhatz e marritz

Tot autre bida m' sèmbla mortz
E tot autre joi desconortz.' [1]

"So might Aubanel of Avignon have said. When Zani, the brunette, fled from Avignon, as the tender and virginal snow vanishes from the hill before the breath of the fine days, — fled in fear from the burning breath of her *felibre*, his heart fainted within him. And now, if you care to know, all sunshine became heavy mist to him, all merriment sad, all life death. Then in the gloom of his spirit, tear by tear, he wrote the 'Book of Death.' The seven sorrows are there; the seven knives of the Pietà have pierced the pages. All that suffers is as his own soul; all that causes suffering, his mortal horror. And so harrowing, so harsh, so real are the pictures which he paints, that it would seem as if the poet, violently robbed of his love (like a tree whose spring buds have been torn away),

[1] Neither winter nor Easter pleases me, nor clear weather, nor foliage of the oak. For my gains seem to me crosses, and all my greatest joys pains. And all my idle hours are anguish, and all my hopes despair. Ordinarily, love and gallantry are to me as the water to the fish. But now, since I have lost these two, like a miserable and exiled man, I find all other life death, and all other joy desolation.

had resolved to be avenged for his cruel fate, by chastising all the instruments of cruelty, — all the tyrannies in the world."

VII.

"So much by way of explaining the principle on which this volume is divided. I have not taken my place upon the threshold to say 'Come and see!' nor to laud that which can speak for itself. And we poets are neither gold nor silver; it is impossible that we should please all. I would merely point the way of refreshment to those who thirst." (Frédéric Mistral.)

And now for some specimens of the "Book of Love." Each song has a motto from some old poet, usually Provençal or Italian. A line from Countess Die heads the first: "*E membre nos qual fo l' comensamens de nostr' amor.*"[1]

Hast thou, like me, the thought before thee
  Forever of a morning fair,
When, by a wayside oratory,
  Thou didst put up thy simple prayer;

[1] Remember how our love began.

A prayer of faith and sweetness olden,
And I, who chanced to pass that way,
Unto thy angel voice beholden,
Was fain, heart-full, my steps to stay?

Here, by the quiet water kneeling,
Where the old willow leans to drink,
"Fair cross and dear," thou saidst, appealing,—
The place is vocal yet, I think!

"O sacred rock of ours,
Fair cross and dear,
Are not the wild-wood flowers
All offered here?

"Wilt thou not, Jesus, hear
The song-bird small?
Thou whose blood runneth clear,
Like brooks, for all?

"Thou, who didst overcome
Dark purgatory,
Lead us into thy home!
Lend us thy glory!"

This was the end. Then I, heart-laden
And fearful, drew the cross anigh.
"That was a lovely prayer, O maiden,
Wilt thou not teach it me?" said I.

And, lady, thou didst not repel me,
But straightway turned with aspect sweet,

Thy simple orison to tell me,
As a bird doth its song repeat.

An ancient prayer, and good! Ah, surely
The men of old were holiest!
I say it oft, I say it purely,
I think of thee, and I am blest.

There follow a few happy little lyrics, one rapturous, another dreamy. The poet sings of his lady's smile; he sings of her quiet grace in the dance; he sings, with a touch of awe, of her readiness for all good works, as in this peculiar and lingering stanza: —

This is a sorry world, and some are tired of living;
So may the dear Lord go with thee
Wherever mourners are! Thou dost assuage their grieving;
Thou lovest all in misery.

The old and gray who travel wearily,
All who lack bread, and all who strive and sigh,
Each motherless little one,
Mothers whose little ones are in the sky, —
No pain is pain the while that thou art by!
Thou sayest, "Poor dear!" in such a tone!

Then the poet's key changes, and he suddenly breaks into passion in a song beginning, "Thy

little warm, brown hand — give it me!" and furnished with a motto from that fiery and ill-fated troubadour, Guillaume de Cabestaing. But equally abrupt is the ensuing transition. The next motto is that line from the "Inferno" which we all know: "We read no more that day." And this is the number: —

"'T is the last time!" "What meanest thou?" "I must go!" . . .
"Whither?" "Ah yes, I am to be a nun."
"What sayest thou, dear? Why dost thou fright me so?
Thou must be ill! Thy youth is scarce begun!
Beware of thy own heart, my little one!
Thou art *not* ill? Then thou hast struck me dead!"
'T was our last day indeed, and this is all we said!

And now the songs of sorrow begin; at first fragmentary and bewildered, and afterwards either fierce in their resistance to pain, or breathing a deep and quiet despondency like the following: —

Far, far away across the sea,
In the still hours when I sit dreaming,
Often and often I voyage in seeming;
And sad is the heart I bear with me
Far, far away across the sea.

Yonder, toward the Dardanelles,
I follow the vessels disappearing,
Slender masts to the sky uprearing;
Follow her, whom I love so well,
Yonder toward the Dardanelles.

With the great clouds I go astray;
These by the shepherd wind are driven
Across the shining stars of heaven
In snowy flocks, and go their way;
And with the clouds I go astray.

I take the pinions of the swallow,
For the fair weather ever yearning,
And swiftly to the sun returning;
So swiftly I my darling follow
Upon the pinions of the swallow.

Homesickness hath my heart possessed,
For now she treads an alien strand;
And for that unknown fatherland
I long, as a bird for her nest.
Homesickness hath my heart possessed.

From wave to wave the salt sea over,
Like a pale corpse I alway seem
On floating, in a deathlike dream,
Even to the feet of my sweet lover,
From wave to wave the salt sea over.

Now am I lying on the shore
Till my love lifts me mutely weeping,
And takes me in her tender keeping,
And lays her hand my still heart o'er,
And calls me from the dead once more.

I clasp her close and hold her long,
"Oh, I have suffered sore," I cry,
"But now we will no longer die!"
Like drowning men's my grasp is strong;
I clasp her close and hold her long.

Far, far away across the sea,
In the still hours when I sit dreaming,
Often and often I voyage in seeming;
And sad is the heart I bear with me
Far, far away across the sea.

Twice the poet makes his way into chambers which his lady has inhabited at different times before she forsook the world. In one he beseeches the little mirror to show him once more the pictures it has reflected so often: his lady at her toilette, at her prayers, "reading in the old prayer-book of her grandfather until she marks the place with a blessed spray and kneels and talks a long while to God," plaiting her abundant hair, or in all the simple glories of

her gala-day dress. Upon the wall of the other he leaves this verse inscribed: —

Ah, chamber poor and small!
However canst thou hold so many memories?
Passing thy sill, each pulse within me cries,
"They come! those two bright girls men used to call
Julia and Zani!" Then my heart replies
"Nay, all is over — all!
Here never more sleep lights on their young eyes,
For heaven hides one — and one, a convent wall."

Presently other troubles overtake the poet. The home of his boyhood is desolated by his mother's death, and he sets forth on a series of aimless journeyings, from the record of which I quote: —

Aye, since my mother died and Zani went away,
I wander high and low; I wander all the day;
No comrade at my side my own sad whim to guide,
Until Avignon's towers once more I have descried.

Then turn I, smitten by a sudden bitterness.
Why should I seek again the home of my distress?
Now I can pass no more before my darling's door,
Nor feel my mother's arms around me as of yore.
I 'll seek some other land, if one perchance there be,
Whose children do not mourn eternally.

So ever since the dawn thou hast travelled heedless on.
And at eventide thou comest unto a hamlet lone,
Deep in some unknown valley, very green and fair;
Already, through the dusk, tremble the stars in air;
The dog begins to bay, and the homely fowl to talk;
And the house-mother, yonder beside the garden-walk
Tying her golden lettuce, pauses and lifts her eyes.
"Give thee good even, friend!" and "Good even!" she replies.
"Whither so late?" "I'm weary, and have missed my road," thou sayest;
"Might I rest under thy roof?" "Ay, surely, that thou mayest!
Enter, and sit thee down!" Then she heaps the hearth with boughs,
And a garment of red firelight makes merry all the house.
"Yon whistle is my man's! He will soon be coming up
From the plowing; wherefore, friend, we will together sup!"
She scans her stew, and cuts her loaf, and makes all haste to bring,
In her goodly copper jug, fresh water from the spring,
Calling her scattered brood ere the door-sill she has crossed.
They come. The soup is poured; and while it cools, the kindly host
Brings thee his home-made wine. Then offers each his plate, —
Sire, grandsire, mother, child, — and thou sharest their estate,
Eatest their bread, and art no longer desolate!

Sleep lies in wait for all or ever the meal is o'er.
So the housewife lights a lamp and brings thee, from her store,
A sheet of fair white linen, — sweet and coarse and clean.
The languor of the limbs is the spirit's balm I ween;
Oh, good it is to sleep in the sheep-fold on the ground,
Dreamless under the leaves, with the dreamless flock around,
Until the goat-bells call thee! Then to live as shepherds do,
And smell the mint all day as thou liest under the blue.

But if the poet found temporary rest of body and soul by the homely hospitable firesides of his native land, it was far otherwise when he had extended his wanderings to foreign countries and stood awe-stricken amid the ruins of the Eternal City. Then his heart-sickness returned upon him overpoweringly; and he sang, —

Rome, with thine old red palaces arow,
And the great sunlight on thy highways beating,
Gay folk, and ladies at the windows sitting, —
They may be fair, — I am too sad to know!

I have climbed Trajan's column, and saw thence
The Quirinal here, and there the Vatican,
The Pope's green gardens; how the Tiber ran
Yellow under its bridges, far, far hence;

And, lifted mountain-like the pines above,
Saint Peter's awful dome. — Ah me, ah me!
Saint Peter of Avignon I would see
Blossom with slender spire from out its grove!

Here were Rome's ancient ramparts, — quarried stone
Crumbling, fire-scarred, with brambles matted thick;
There, the huge Coliseum's tawny brick,
The twin arcs hand in hand. But there is one

In mine own country, I saw clearer yet.
Thou art the Arles arena in my eyes,
Great ruin! And my homesick spirit cries
For one I love, nor ever can forget.

And still, as from my watch-tower, I discerned,
Out in the waste Campagna, errant flocks
Of hornèd bulls tossing their fierce, black locks
As in our own Camargue, the thought returned,

Why dost thou not forget? Thou thought'st to leave
By land, by sea, some portion of thy woe;
But time is wasting, and thy life wears low,
And ever more and more thou seem'st to grieve.

With the first return of spring after his misfortunes, the poet finds himself back in Provence, lying by a brookside, while there rings in his ears that charming verse from the "Rouman de Jaufré" in which the birds "warble above the young verdure, and make merry *in their Latin:*"

Violets tint the meadows o'er,
Swallows have come back once more,
And spring sunshine like the former,
  But rosier, warmer;
Leafage fair, the plane-tree decking,
Shadows all the wood-ways flecking:
  Mirth unrecking,
  Heavy heart,
Here hast thou no part!

On the green bank of the river
Low I lie, while o'er me quiver
Lights and odors, leaves and wings,
  All glad things.
Blossoms every bough are haunting,
Everywhere is laughing, chanting,
  No joy wanting:
  Heavy heart,
Here hast thou no part!

In and out each rustic porch,
Flocks of maidens, fair and arch,
Full as nightingales of song,
  Futter, throng,
Chase each other, pull the clover;
Each hath tales of her own lover
  To tell over:
  Heavy heart,
Here hast thou no part!

Now, for very mirth of soul,
They will dance the farandole.
Dance on, mad-caps, never noting
  Hair loose floating;

Rosy-faced your races run,
Through the dwarf-oaks in the sun:
  Heed not one,
  Heavy heart,
That hath here no part.

Two and two, with hands entwining,
Dance, until the moon is shining!
I and mine dance never more.
  That is o'er.
O my God, the sweet brown face!
Shall yon dreary convent-place
  Quench its grace?
  Heavy heart,
Here hast thou no part!

And so on, for more pages than one cares to quote, or even to read consecutively, tuneful though they are. The fancies are infinite, but the mode never changes, nor the theme. Quaint little pictures of Provençal life keep flitting across the background of Aubanel's sorrow, their brightness intensified by the surrounding gloom, — as when the sunshine falls on a landscape from behind a storm cloud. At last there comes a motto from the "Imitation," — "*Quia sine dolore, non vivitur in amore*," — followed by a sort of prayer recording the poet's rather forlorn endeavor to reconcile himself to the strange system

of chastening and disappointment which he finds prevailing in the world. And so ends the "Book of Love."

In the series of twelve poems which M. Mistral has rather fantastically christened the "Entre-luisado," or "Intergleam," or "Lucid Interval," the poet tells us little about himself, but we learn to love him better, perhaps, than before, for the real breadth and warmth of his human sympathies. Some of his themes are homely almost to the verge of coarseness, and treated with a frankness quite troublesome to reproduce. The attempt is made with two of them. The first is called

THE TWINS.

What sayest thou? there are two more now,
And we were beggars before? Hey-day!
'T is God hath sent the twain, I trow,
And shall they not be welcome, pray?
Two boys! But 't is a pretty brood!
Observe how sweet they are! Ah, well,
Soon as the birdling breaks the shell
The mother still must give it food!
Come, babies, one to either side!
Mother can bear it,
Never fear it!
Her boys shall aye be satisfied!

There 'll never be too many here;
I 'd rather count my flock by pairs!
I always find it time of cheer
When a new baby hither fares.
Two? Why, of course! I ask you whether
My pair the cradle more than fills?
And, by and by, if God so wills,
Can they not go to school together?
Come, babies, etc.

My man 's a fisher. He and I
Have had seven children. And, indeed,
God helps poor folk amazingly —
Not one has ever died of need!
And now, what do you think? Our kids
Have only had those fishing-nets
Out yonder, of my Bénézet's,
And my own milk, for all their needs.
Come, babies, etc.

Sometimes the blessed nets will break;
God sends too many fish, I say.
And then must I my needle take
And mend, some livelong, leisure day.
He sells them living, then. Such freaks!
They fairly leap the basket out!
And this is why, beyond a doubt,
My young ones have such rosy cheeks.
Come, babies, etc.

In summer, when the streams are low,
  And naught to catch the Rhone along,
My man outstrips them all who row
  From Barthelasse to Avignon;
And makes our living thus, instead;
  There is no wolf beside our door,
  But in the cupboard aye a store,
And every hungry mouth is fed.
    Come, babies, etc.

Are they so marvellous, my twins?
  Is one by one the usual way
With mothers? Well, that only means
  I am of better race than they!
Two in ten months! Come, Bénézet,
  Here 's work for thee, my brave old man.
  What I have done, not many can;
So haste and fill the blessed net!
    Come, babies, etc.

My gossips murmur solemnly,
  " Nora, thou canst not rear them both.
They 'll drain thy life, as thou wilt see;
  Put one away, however loath! "
Put one away! That would be fine!
  I will not, — so! Come, dearies, come;
  In mother's arms there aye is room,
Her life 's your living, lambkins mine!
    Come, babies, etc.

The other, which is addressed to Mme. Cecile Brunet, the wife of one of the sacred *felibres*, is, in the original, wonderfully like a "Nativity" by some innocent old master. It seems a "Nativity" of the Dutch school, however, and the wonder is that the author of the sad and tender lyrics in the "Book of Love" can write of any thing with so small an admixture of sentiment. In this case only I have departed from the metre of the original to the extent of shortening each line by one foot. I did not know how else to indicate, in our comparatively stiff and sober tongue, the *babyishness*, the nursery-rhyme character, of the original.

Room for this tiny creature!
Ere any neighbor goes,
Let her scan each pretty feature, —
Wee mouth and comic nose.

Take, grandame, the new-comer,
And strike it to bring its breath!
He 's red as plums in summer,
But a lusty cry he hath!

The mother is glad and weak;
She smiles amid her pain.
Lay the babe against her cheek;
It will make her well again!

And where is the father? Fie!
A man with bearded lips
To hide him away and cry!
But 't is for joy he weeps.

And tears are good, I know;
And laughter is good. By these
We stay life's overflow,
The full heart getteth ease.

Here comes a maiden small
Would kiss her baby brother;
But the cradle is too tall —
Ay, let her have it, mother!

The house from sill to loft
Is full of merry din;
And the dresser, scoured so oft,
And the old faience, shine clean.

And every way at once
(None kinder and none sweeter)
Our busy Mary runs;
Joy makes her footsteps fleeter.

Till the guests are gathered all,
Kinsmen and sponsors twain,
And for Saint Agricol
Departs our happy train.

Choose, maids, your gallants brave!
Be ready, lads, I pray!
That clerk nor chaplain grave
May wait for as to-day.

State-robed in nurse's arms,
Baby before us goes.
Oh, scan his infant charms, —
Wee mouth and comic nose!

Equally artless and realistic, and wholly local in their coloring, are a "Song of the Silk-Spinners," and a "Song of the Reapers," — the latter dedicated to M. Mistral. There is also a picture of a Provençal *salon*, which is rendered quite as much for its indirect interest as for its intrinsic grace. Observe the essentially *musical* manner in which the two phrases of the simple theme are repeated and varied.

TO MADAME ——.

I.

O lady, many a time, at sober eventide,
In yon cosey bower of thine, the blazing hearth beside,
Thou hast given me a place. And sure, no otherwhere
Are kinder folk or brighter fires than there!

And at five of summer morns I have risen many a time
With thee the airy heights of Font Segune to climb;
Of fairy Font Segune, delightsome castle, hung,
High like a linnet's nest, the trees among.

And so, when winter reigned, I have warmed me at thy blaze;
And so, when summer burned, I have walked thy shady ways;

And oft beside thy board, with those little ones of thine,
I have eaten of thy bread and drunk thy wine.

II.

And were the nights not fair with wit,
When those same crackling boughs were lit?
And thou, my lady, thou didst sit
Queen of the home and of us all?
There flashed the needle's tiny steel,
There was there laughter, peal on peal,
And Jules replied to Roumanille,
And Aubanel did challenge Paul.

There gentle damsels came and lent
The graces of their merriment;
Their beauty made our hearts content, —
The angel of the hearth, Clarice,
The angel of the poor, Fifine,
Whose white hands tend the peasant's wean,
And make the beds all cool and clean,
Where little sufferers lie at ease.

Oh, sweet under the foliage,
When tropic heats of summer rage,
Of birds to list the gossip sage,
To list the laughing fountain's tune;
And when the glowing day is dead,
And dusky forest ways we tread,
With the full moonshine overhead,
Still is it fair at Font Segune.

And yet I reckon this the best,
To sit thine honored table guest;
And, 'mid the fire of friendly jest,
To click the glass of good old wine;
To take the bread thy friendly hand
Hath cut; and half to understand,
That cordial eyes on every hand
Do brighter for my coming shine.

III.

So all that helps us live, and tunes our courage higher, —
Sweet looks of kindliest charity,
Good shade, good hope, good faith, good cheer, good fire, —
Dear lady, I have found with thee!

It were not easy then to tell the whole, —
If but my lips could sing, as can my soul!

Upon the serenity of these domestic and rural pictures descend, or are made to descend, abruptly, the chills and terrors of the "Book of Death." In this final section is undoubtedly included the most powerful writing of our author. It opens with a wild and dreary song entitled "All-Saints Day," which is interesting as presenting an almost unique picture of late autumn in the South.

Withered fields and wailing cry
Of poplars high,
Wildly flinging their leaves around,
While the fierce *mistral* bends like a withe
The stem so lithe,
And the tempest mutters along the ground.

Not a spear of golden grain
On all the plain!
Ants are in their holes once more.
Even the snail draws in his horns,
And returns
To his house, and shuts the door.

On the holm-oak no cicala
Holdeth gala!
Dim with frost his mirrors[1] now;
Little rustics make their moan
For mulberries gone
And birds' nests vanished from the bough.

Sudden flights of larks are loud
In the cloud,
Muttering terror and dismay.
Huntsmen's echoing shots resound
All around,
And their dogs for ever bay.

[1] The two shining and sonorous membranes under the abdomen of the cicala, which produce the noise known as its song, are called in Provençal *mirau* or mirrors.

On the hillock there is ruin
Past undoing.
Axes ringing on the oak:
While the charcoal-burner's fire
Mounteth higher,
As the north-wind lifts the smoke.

Lambs to highland pasture straying,
Or delaying
In the mead, are met no more.
Covered are they from the cold
In the fold,
And the shepherd props the door.

Thrifty men ply hammer and plane,
Else they drain,
By the ingle, many a flask.
Girls, under the grain-stack's lee,
Busily
Braid the garlic for their task.

All the woods are sere and dun,
Where the sun
Sinks the leafless boughs behind.
Where the vineyard's prunings lie
Silently,
Toiling women fagots bind.

But the poor are they who gather
Dead wood, rather,
Or for bark the forest range;
Else in scanty rags and dreary,
Barefoot, weary,
Stroll the hamlet, haunt the grange.

Comes a little shivering maid,
Half afraid,
Opes a pallid hand and thin.
She 's an orphan, and, indeed,
Faint for need:
Drop, I pray, an alms therein!

When beside the oven bright,
Loaves are white,
Think of her whose man is dead,
Who hath bolted flour no more
In her store;
Nay, whose oven hath no bread.

Southward, hark, the floods are falling,
Thunder calling;
Swells the Rhone in the black weather.
Hark! the footfall of Death's feet,
Coming fleet,
Young and old to reap togethér!

After this ominous and melancholy prelude, comes a poem entitled "The Famine," a plaintive but somewhat monotonous dialogue between two hungry babies and the mother who is vainly trying to hush them asleep without their supper. The next, "The Lamp," is the watch of a mother by her dead child. The next is very curious in its solemnity. It is called "Lou Tregen."

THIRTEEN.

"Touch, for your life, no single viand costly!
Taste not a drop of liquor where it shines!
Be here but as the cat who lingers ghostly
About the flesh upon the spit, and whines;
Ay, let the banquet freeze or perish wholly,
Or ever a morsel pass your lips between!
For I have counted you, my comrades jolly,
Ye are thirteen, all told, — I say *thirteen!*"

"Well, what of that?" the messmates answered lightly;
"So be it then! We are as well content!
The longer table means, if we guess rightly,
Space for more jesters, broader merriment."
"'T is I will wake the wit and spice the folly!
The haughtiest answer when I speak, I ween.
And I have counted you, my comrades jolly!
Ye are thirteen, all told, — I say *thirteen!*"

"So ho! thou thinkest then to quench our laughter?
Thou art a gloomy presence, verily!
We wager that we know what thou art after!
Come, then, a drink! and bid thy vapors fly!
Thou shalt not taint us with thy melancholy" —
"Nay, 'tis not thirst gives me this haggard mien.
Laugh to your hearts' content, my comrades jolly;
Still I have counted, and ye are *thirteen!*"

"Who art thou then, thou kill-joy? What 's thy nature,
And what thy name, and what thy business here?"

"My name is death! Observe my every feature.
I waken longing and I carry fear.
Sovereign am I of mourners and of jesters;
Behind the living still I walk unseen,
And evermore make one among the feasters
When all their tale is told, and they *thirteen.*"

"Ha! art thou Death? I am well pleased to know thee,"
A gallant cried, and held his glass aloft;
"Their scarecrow tales, O Death, small justice do thee:
Where are the terrors thou hast vaunted oft?
Come, feast with me as often as they bid thee!
Our friendly plates be laid with none between."
"Silence!" cried Death, "and follow where I lead thee,
For thou art he who makest us *thirteen.*"

Sudden, as a grape-cluster, when dissevered
By the sharp knife, drops from the parent bough,
The crimson wine-glass of the gallant wavered
And fell; chill moisture started to his brow.
Death crying, "Thou canst not walk, but I can carry,"
Shouldered his burden with a ghastly grin,
And to the stricken feasters said, "Be wary!
I make my count oft as ye make *thirteen.*"

It is but just to Aubanel to say that the tinge of burlesque, which all our efforts have hardly been equal to excluding from this imperfect version, is nowhere in the original, which is of a truly childlike gravity and intensity. It seems

always difficult for one who uses our language to depict superstition pure and simple with entire seriousness; and this is, perhaps, especially true of the American. The most ardent advocates among us of the various forms of "spiritualism" in religion, and quackery in medicine, are ever driven to make a show of supporting their vagaries by a vast pretence of scientific arguments, very falsely so called. We are, as a nation, wofully wanting in the grace of credulity, which few men can make more engaging than the Provençal poets. I have space for but two more of our author's efforts, or rather for my own inadequate reproduction of them. The first shall be the famous "Neuf Thermidor." Famous it may fairly be called, since every one of the author's European critics singles it out for mention, some of them in terms of extravagant praise. It is easier, however, to account for its fascination to a Gaul, than to approach in English its very ghastly *naïveté*.

THE NINTH OF THERMIDOR.

"Thou with the big knife, whither away?"
"Headsman am I, with folk to slay!"

"But all thy vest is dabbled with gore,
And thy hands, — O headsman, wash them, pray."
"Wherefore? I shall not have done to-day!
I have heads to sever, a many more!"

"Thou with the big knife, whither away?"
"Headsman am I, with folk to slay!"

"Ay, ay! but thou art a sire as well!
Hast fondled a babe, and dost not shrink,
Nor need so much as a maddening drink,
Mother and child at a stroke to fell?"

"Thou with the big knife, whither away?"
"Headsman am I, with folk to slay!"

"But all the square with dead is strewn,
And the living remnant kneel and sue!
Art a man or a devil? Tell us true!"
"I've a stint to finish! Let me alone!"

"Thou with the big knife, whither away?"
"Headsman am I, with folk to slay!"

"Oh, what is the flavor of thy wine?
And why is the foam on thy goblet red?
And tell us, when thou bakest thy bread
Dost thou the savor of flesh divine?"

"Thou with the big knife, whither away?"
"Headsman am I, with folk to slay!"

"Dost thou sweat? Art thou tired? Why, rest a bit!
Let not thy shuddering prey go free!
For we have no notchèd knife like thee,
And this is a woman! Prithee, sit!"

"Thou with the big knife, whither away?"
"Headsman am I, with folk to slay!"

"Ha! she is off! And the turn 's thine own!
On the wooden pillow, musty and black,
Thy cheek shall lie, and thy sinews crack,
And thy head — why, headsman, it hath flown!"

"Sharpen the notchèd knife anew!
Sever the head of the headsman too!"

There is a long and somewhat elaborate trilogy concerning the "Massacre of the Innocents," of which the numbers are entitled, "Saint Joseph's Day," "The Massacre," and "The Lamentations," which I leave untouched; and the last specimen selected shall be the poem with which this strange little volume concludes, and where the singer finds again something of the pious and plaintive sweetness of his earlier notes. It is an invocation to an African Madonna, dedicated to Mgr. Pavy, the Bishop of Algiers, and records the fulfilment (perhaps by

way of contributions to the Algerian chapel) of some vow once made with reference to the poet's unhappy passion. The metre is interesting, as presenting two among the many varieties attempted by the Provençals on the original strophe of "Mirèio," that most rich and musical stanza so singularly adapted to the genius of the modern Langue d'oc.[1]

OUR LADY OF AFRICA.

Oh, long with life-blood waterèd,
Old Afric, soon or late, that seed shall fructify;
Saints' blood and warriors' hath for aye
Made roses beautiful and red,
That ever blow God's altar by.

[1] Dr. Edward Böhmer, Professor of the Romance Languages in the University of Halle, in a small volume entitled "The Provençal Poetry of the Present," and full of genial and intelligent criticism, says: "This strophe of Mistral's is not entirely his own invention. The number of lines, the succession of rhymes, and the relative position of the masculines and feminines, are to be found in the 'Paouro Janeto' of the Marquis de la Faire-Alais, and in a poem by the same, addressed to Jasmin, as the last part of a longer strophe, whose feminine lines are of the same length as Mistral's. The latter lengthened both the masculine verses to Alexandrines, and thus gave epic repose to the energetic and impetuous movement of the verse." ("Provencalische Poesie der Gegenwart," p. 36.) The reader is referred to the preface to the American edition of "Mirèio" for an attempt to imitate this stanza in English, and to Dr. Böhmer's volume for another, hardly more successful, to render it into German.

O Rose of Afric, Lady blessèd,
Have pity on our souls distressèd!
Our land is parched and dead. Ah! beauteous Rose of ours,
In tender showers impart
The dew-drops of thy heart,
The perfume of thy flowers!

A chapel we have builded thee
Aloft. Oh, let it be a signal and a star!
Where lonely Arab riders are,
Where seamen battle with the sea,
Its rays of comfort shine afar!

O Rose of Afric, Lady blessèd, etc.

And ye, under the blinding glow
Of desert suns, who toil onward through desert sands,
O caravans in weary lands,
Make halt where Mary's roses blow,
Seek shade and solace at her hands!

O Rose of Afric, Lady blessèd, etc.

Of costly stones and marble all,
Stately and strong the chapel we have reared so high;
Thither as to a home we fly.
May Afric's rose grow fair and tall,
Till on our fane its shadow fall!

O Rose of Afric, Lady blessèd, etc.

My vow is paid; my love of yore,
Virgin, in thy gold censer quite consumed away.
Now heal my heart; and save, I pray,

All those who sail the waters o'er
From my Provence to Afric's shore.

O Rose of Afric, Lady blessèd, etc.

And last I lay this book of mine
Before thy feet, who art love, life, and hope; and pray
Thou wilt accept the untaught lay,
And in some sacred wreath of thine
My flower of youth and honor twine.

I have adhered to M. Mistral's arrangement of his friend's verses, but cannot refrain from expressing my own conviction that, however picturesque, it is a somewhat artificial one, and furnishes but an imperfect clew to the chronological order of the poems. In Theodore Aubanel, who is, in many ways, a perfectly representative child of the South and descendant of the Troubadours, qualities meet which we are not used to see associated. He is both soft and fierce. He loves with a devotion, and also with a delicacy, as rare as it is affecting. He mourns with infantine desperation. He hates with a peculiar and almost gamesome zest. As compared with Mistral, he has less power, whether descriptive or dramatic, but more grace, of a certain wild, faun-like character, while he shows barely a trace of the training

of the schools. Mistral's simplicity is often studied. The ideals of Greek and Roman antiquity are ever present to his imagination, and he avows himself an "humble scholar of the great Homer." Many of his critics have noted the Homeric character of the refrains in the ninth canto of "Mirèio," but this is only one among many instances. The charming description of the cup of carved wood which Alari offered to Mirèio is obviously imitated from Virgil's third "Eclogue," as this again is imitated from the first and fifth "Idyls" of Theocritus. It is greatly enriched indeed, but some, even of the details, are precisely similar; as for example, the fact that neither cup had yet been used for drinking: —

"Sentié 'ncaro lou nou, i'avié panca begu."

and: —

"Necdum illis labra admovi, sed condita servo."

And the same is true of the descriptions of the public games in "Calendau." But Theodore Aubanel is purely indigenous, and need not be other than he is, if Greece and Rome had never existed. The antecedents of his genius are the love-songs and *sirventes* of the Troubadours, and the silence of the last few hundred years.

JACQUES JASMIN.

I.

IT is a little singular that the band of enthusiasts, who style themselves exclusively the Provençals and are formally devoted to the adventure of restoring the Langue d'oc to its place in literature, should appear almost unconscious of the fact that they were preceded, by about twenty-five years, in the self-same fascinating path which they have chosen, by one of the most careful artists as well as truest poets of this century. Jacques Jasmin, the barber of Agen, in Gascony, published his first volume of dialect poems in 1835, when Frédéric Mistral was a child of four, hardly old enough to prey upon the mulberries and olives of his father's *mas*, before he had come even under the mild restraints of Master Roumanille's school. This earliest volume of Jasmin's — called, with a mixture of gayety and simplicity quite peculiar to himself, "Papillotos, or Curl Papers"— was

followed, at intervals of several years, by two others. These, like their predecessor, contained hosts of those little personal and occasional Lyrics, Tributes, Dedications, Thanks for testimonials, Hymns for festivals, which M. Sainte-Beuve rather impatiently characterizes as "*improvisations obligées*" and "*compliments en madrigaux*," and of which Jasmin himself says, with something as near an apology as his complete *naïveté* will allow him, "One can only pay a poetical debt by means of *impromptus;* and impromptus may be very good money of the heart, but they are almost always bad money of the head." But among these comparatively trivial, though always musical and pleasing pieces, there were a half-dozen poems of another and higher order: romantic tales in verse of two or three or more *paouzos* (pauses or cantos), noble in conception, abounding in action, and wrought out with very patient care; instinct with the author's own gentle vivacity, and at the same time impressive by the dignity of simple, natural passion.

The rustic dialect from which Jasmin never departed, he lifted to the level of these more

serious themes as easily, as triumphantly, as Mr. Lowell adapted his extraordinary Yankee speech to the tones of keenest pathos, in No. X. of the second series of "Biglow Papers;" and more cannot be said. All the magnates in criticism of Jasmin's generation came forward, soon or late, and surrounded him with their applause. Cities and royal personages had medals struck in his honor. His works were collected in a cheap popular edition, of one volume, in 1860, a few months only after the Parisian world was first electrified by the publication of "Mirèio." Eight years before this, at a public meeting of the French Academy, August 20, 1852, an extraordinary prize of five thousand francs had been awarded to the Gascon poet, and M. Villemain, in a stately address, had declared it to be the purpose of that august body also to have a medal struck in his honor: "*La médaille du poète moral et populaire.*" Earlier yet, Charles Nodier had subdued his amazement at the incongruity between Jasmin's calling and his genius; and had begged him, with an air of impulsive patronage at once amiable and amusing, not to intermit the manufacture of peri-

wigs; "for this," says the lively Gaul, ever intent on his epigram, "is an honest trade; while verse-making is but a frivolous distraction." M. Léonce de Lavergne dwelt, with an enthusiasm rather generous in a true Provençal, on the onomatopoetic beauties of the Gascon *patois*. M. de Pontmartin classed Jasmin with Theocritus, Horace, and La Fontaine, and paid him the singular tribute of saying that he had made good as attractive as other Frenchmen had made evil. Finally, M. Sainte-Beuve (*salut à son âme*) warmly yet carefully appreciated him. "Away on your snow-white paper wings," cries Jasmin merrily to his verses, when he dedicates to the king of critics a new edition of his first volume, "for now you know that an angel protects you! He has even dressed you up in fine French robes and put you in the 'Deux Mondes'!"

It is to the "Causeries" that the reader must go for a complete analysis of Jacques Jasmin's literary qualities, and a guide to the more recondite beauties of his speech. Here, preceding some experiments in translation, an attempt is made merely to show some of the points in which his

works resemble, and some in which they differ from, those of that younger school of singers in Southern France, a few of whose productions have already been reviewed in these pages.

And first, notwithstanding that local "jealousy between Gascon and Provençal" which M. de Lavergne frankly allows in his admirable notice of Jasmin's masterpiece, "Françonette," there seems to be nothing deliberately disingenuous in the silence of the Provençals about Jasmin; no reason to suppose that their inspiration is in any way borrowed from him. These men of Southern France were born, one and all of them, in the native land of modern poetry, and have breathed none but its native air. The echoes of all its varied measures, nay, of the very rhymes which are its distinguishing characteristic, perpetually haunt their every-day talk. They tread its ruins under foot. Its seeds lie dormant in all their soil. One such seed germinated at Agen, in the first quarter of our century; a handful more about Avignon, twenty-five years later. The rich wild flowers which they have borne are of the same family, indeed,

and have certain fundamental resemblances, but they are quite distinct in color, shape, and even fragrance. Here is no miracle; still less, good ground for a charge of plagiarism.

Jasmin is Gascon; not in the present restricted application of the term Provençal; and his dialect, though closely allied to that of the Bouches-du-Rhône, must, it seems to me, be pronounced slightly inferior to the latter in the melody of its terminations, and, hence, in its rhythmic capabilities. But the two sustain the same relation to the classic Romance, — that lovely but short-lived eldest daughter of the Latin. The Gascon poet is at once more conventional in his imagery, and less enterprising in the matter of metre, than his young neighbors. He uses freely the most obvious and trite comparisons. Lips are cherry-red, teeth snow-white, etc.: whereas the metaphors of his juniors are often too quaint to be spontaneous, and we know that they know the beaten paths by their sedulous avoidance of them. Jasmin clings also to the measures most approved in legal French poetry, especially to Alexandrines and iambic tetrameters, and to their irregular association in a sort of ballad metre, which in

English has been best handled by Robert Browning in "Hervé Riel," and indeed most happily chosen for that essentially French poem. Mistral seized these same irregular iambics, and speedily moulded them into the ornate verse which became so astonishing a vehicle of varied expression in "Mirèio" and "Calendau," and upon which his followers, in their turn, executed all sorts of variations. But Mistral and his *felibres* seem never for a moment free from a sense of their high commission to repudiate or reform all that is distinctively French, and set up in its stead that which is distinctively Provençal. They may justly claim, most of them, to have made deliberate choice of an humble and rustic form of expression, when a more literate one was equally at their command; while Jasmin, in all probability, could never have written in learned French, and did but sing because he must. Both Jasmin and the Provençals have the self-confidence of real power; but they are self-confident with a difference. When some one told Jasmin that he had revived the traditions of the Troubadours, "Troubadours!" he cried, — one can imagine with what a lusty peal of laughter, — "why I

am a great deal better poet than any of the Troubadours! Not one of them could have composed a long poem of sustained interest like my 'Françonette'!" Which is perfectly true; but a man, to say it of himself, must have a conspicuous absence of small vanity, and a considerable sense of humor. While the Provençals, though they have doubtless a fine audacity and fervid faith with regard to the future, speak always with due humility of Homer, and are almost preternatural in their gravity.

Sainte-Beuve quotes with keen enjoyment the demure yet decided terms in which Jasmin refused, in 1849, the challenge of one Peyrottes, who had summoned him to contend with himself in one of those poetical tournaments revived from the Middle Ages, in which Mistral and his colleagues afterwards engaged with enthusiasm, and won many laurels. "I dare not," wrote Jasmin quaintly, "enter the lists with you. The courser who drags his chariot with difficulty, albeit he arrives at the goal, cannot contend against the fiery locomotive of the railway. The art which produces verses one by

one cannot compete with *manufacture*. My muse declares herself vanquished in advance, and I hereby authorize you to record the declaration." And then, as if sensible and repentant of a lurking arrogance in his refusal, he adds, in a postscript, "I love glory, but the success of another never troubles my sleep." And though Jasmin's declamations and readings of his own poems are said to have been in the highest degree dramatic and affecting, the spirit of that reply was undoubtedly sincere, and his methods of composition were such as he describes, — assiduous, quiet, slow. "I have learned," he once said, "that in moments of heat and emotion we are all eloquent and laconic, alike in speech and action, — unconscious poets, in fact; and I have also learned that it is possible for a muse to become all this wittingly, and by dint of patient toil."

Sainte-Beuve, whose judgments constantly recur, sums up all his eloquent praise of the Gascon poet by saying that he is invariably *sober*. No doubt, the Provençals proper, even Mistral, their greatest poet, — rarely in "Mirèio," but oftener in "Calendau," — are apt to be tem-

porarily the worse for the wine of what they are pleased to consider their ethnic inspiration. But their interesting careers were hardly begun at a time when Jasmin's was rounding to its close, and when he was already declared better to have fulfilled his promises than any other poet of his generation. If they can but imitate his simple and conscientious devotion to art, and grow as he grew even to old age, they will shed an equal lustre on that historic land of song which aliens will always regard as their common country.

In no poem of Jasmin's are the most characteristic qualities of his mind — his candor, his pathos, and his humor — more abundantly shown than in that which he has entitled "My Souvenirs," and from which some extracts will now be made. He begins the unique story of his life, as he is very apt to begin a story, confidentially and colloquially: —

> Now will I keep my promise, and will tell
> How I was born, and what my youth befell.
>
> The poor, decrepit century passed away,
> Had barely two more years on earth to stay,
> When in a dingy and a dim retreat,
> An old rat-palace in a narrow street,

Behind a door, Shrove Tuesday morn,
Just as the day flung its black night-cap by,
Of mother lame, and humpbacked sire, was born
A boy, — and it was I.

When princes come to life, the cannon thunder
With joy ; but when I woke,
Being but a tailor's son, it was no wonder
Not even a cracker spoke.
Only a certain charivarian[1] band
Before our neighbor's door had ta'en its stand,
Whereby my little virgin ears were torn
With dreadful din of kettle and of horn,
Which only served to echo wide the drone
Of forty couplets of my father's own.

His father, it seems, was a village poet, a spinner of doggerel for these charivari; and this was the humble seed which, being mysteriously fructified, produced genius in the son. He goes on to assure us that, in his coarse and mended swaddling-clothes, and sleeping on a little bed stuffed with lark's feathers, he grew, if some-

[1] The charivari, so common in the south of France, is a terrific uproar produced by kettles, frying-pans, and horns, accompanied by shouts and cries, and the singing of rather low songs, which is set up at night, under the windows of the newly married, especially if they are in advanced years or have been married before.

what lean and angular, as fast as any king's son, until he was seven years old, and then—

> Suddenly life became a pastime gay.
> We can but paint what we have felt, they say:
> Why, then must feeling have begun for me
> At seven years old; for then myself I see,
> With paper cap on head, and horn in hand,
> Following my father in the village band.
> Was I not happy while the horns were blowing?
> Or, better still, when we by chance were going,
> A score or more, as we were wont to, whiles,
> To gather fagots on the river isles?
> Bare heads, bare feet, our luncheon carrying,
> Just as the noontide bells began to ring,
> We would set forth. Ah, that was glee!
> Singing, *The lamb thou gavest me!*
> I 'm merry at the very memory!

He goes on to describe with extreme zest, and a wonderful richness of local coloring, the impromptu *fêtes* in which he thus bore a part; the raids upon cherry and plum-orchards. "I should need a hundred trumpets," he says, "to celebrate all my victories!" And then the dances around bonfires, and other fantastic ceremonies of St. John's Eve. Then he tells, in words of exquisite softness, how the first light shadow fell upon his baby spirit:—

Nathless, I was a dreamy little thing.
One simple word would strike me mute full often,
And I would hark, as to a viol string,
And knew not why I felt my heart so soften:
And that was *school*, — a pleasant word enow;
But when my mother, at her spinning-wheel,
Would pause, and look on me with pitying brow,
And breathe it to my grandsire, I would feel
A sudden sorrow, as I eyed the twain,
A mystery, a long whole moment's pain.

And something else there was that made me sad:
I liked to fill a little pouch I had,
At the great fairs, with whatso I could glean,
And then to bid my mother look within;
And if my purse but showed her I had won
A few poor coins, a sou for service done,
Sighing, "Ah my poor little one," she said,
"This comes in time;" and then my spirit bled.
Yet laughter soon came back, and I
Was giddier than before, a very butterfly.

So, after fair-time, came vintage with all its manifold joys; and then suddenly the winter, when, in the dearth of fire-wood, the child was fain to sun himself in sheltered nooks while the daylight lasted. But "how fair is the nightfall of the grim winter day!" At that hour a score or more of women, with their younger children, used to assemble in a large room, lighted by a

single antique lamp, suspended from the ceiling. The women had distaffs and heavy spindles, on which they spun a kind of coarse pack-thread, which the children wound, sitting upon stools at their feet. And all the while, one old dame or another would be telling ogreish stories of "Blue Beard," "Sorcerer," or "*Loup-garou*," to fascinate the ears and trouble the dreams of her young auditory.

At last a winter came when I could keep
No more my footstool; for there chanced a thing
So strange, so sorrowful, so harrowing,
That long, long afterwards it made me weep.

Sweet ignorance, why is thy kind disguise
So early rent from happy little eyes?

I mind one Monday, — 't was my tenth birthday, —
The other boys had throned me king, in play,
When I was smitten by a sorry sight:
Two cartmen bore some aged helpless wight,
In an old willow chair, along the way.
I watched them as they near and nearer drew;
And what saw I? Dear God, could it be true?
'T was my own grandsire, and our household all
Following. I saw but him. With sudden yearning,
I sprang and kissed him. He, my kiss returning,
For the first time, some piteous tears let fall.

"Where wilt thou go? and why wilt thou forsake
Us, little ones, who love thee?" was my cry.
"Dear, they are taking me," my grandsire spake,
"Unto the almshouse, *where the Jasmins die.*"
Kissed me once more, closed his blue eyes, passed on.
Far through the trees we followed them, be sure.
In five more days the word came he was gone.
For me, sad wisdom woke that Monday dawn:
Then knew I first that we were very poor.

And here the first section of Jasmin's memories, which he began to rehearse so gayly, closes as with a sob. When he resumes, he seems half abashed at the homeliness of the tale which he has undertaken to tell. Shall he soften it? He pauses to query. Shall he dress it up with false lights and colors? For these are days when falsehood in silk and gold seems always acceptable, and the "naked, new-born truth" unwelcome. But he repudiates the thought: —

Myself, nor less nor more, I 'll draw for you,
And, if not fair, the likeness shall be true.

That death of his grandfather, he goes on to say, sank like a plummet into his heart, and seemed for the first time to reveal to him the utter squalor of his surroundings. He describes

in a minute fashion, at once droll and exceedingly pathetic, the exposure of their tenement to the four winds of heaven; the ragged bed-curtains; the cracked pottery, and worn wooden vessels off which they ate and drank; the smoky, frameless mirror; the rickety chairs. "My mother explained it all," he says: —

Now saw I why our race, from sire to son,
For many lives, had never died at home;
But time for crutches having come,
The almshouse claimed its own.
I saw why one brisk woman every morn
Paused, pail in hand, my grandame's threshold by:
She brought her, not yet old, though thus forlorn,
The bread of charity.
And ah, that wallet! by two cords uphung,
Wherein my hands for broken bread went straying, —
Grandsire had borne it round the farms among,
A morsel from his ancient comrades praying.
Poor grandsire! When I kept him company,
The softest bit was evermore for me!

All this was shame and sorrow exquisite.
I played no more at leap-frog in the street,
But sat and dreamed about the seasons gone.
And if chance things my sudden laughter won, —
Flag, soldier, hoop, or kite, — it died away
Like the pale sunbeam of a weeping day.

However, there was a happy change at hand: and here, unhappily for his translator, the poet abandons his flowing pentameters; but one must, if possible, keep step with him: —

One morn my mother came, as one with gladness crazed,
Crying, "Come, Jacques, to school!" Stupid, I stood and gazed.
"To school! What then? Are we grown rich?" I cried, amazed.
"Nay, nay, poor little one! Thou wilt not have to pay!
Thy cousin[1] gives it thee, and I am blessed this day."

Behold me, then, with fifty others set,
Mumbling my lesson in the alphabet.
I had a goodly memory; or so they used to say.
Thanks to this pious dame, therefore,
'Twixt smiles and tears it came to pass
That I could read in six months more;
In six months more, could say the mass;
In six months more, I might aspire
To *tantum ergo* and the choir;
In six months more, still paying nothing,
I passed the sacred college gate;
In six months more, with wrath and loathing,
They thrust me forth. Ah, luckless fate!

[1] Sister Boe, the old school-mistress of Agen, who acted the part of a generous relative, and gave the poet the rudiments of reading and writing.

'T was thus: a tempting prize was offered by and by
Upon the term's last week, and my theme won the same.
(A cassock 't was, and verily
As autumn heather old and dry.)
Nathless, when mother dear upon Shrove Monday came,
My cheeks fired when we kissed; along my veins the blood
Racing in little *blobs* did seem.
More darns were in the cassock, well I understood,
Than errors in my theme;
But glad at heart was I, and the gladder for her glee.
What love was in her touch! What looks she gave her son!
"Thank God, thou learnest well!" said she;
"For this is why, my little one,
Each Tuesday comes a loaf, and so rude the winter blows,
It is welcome, as He knows."

Thereon I gave my word I would very learned be,
And when she turned away, content was in her eyes.
So I pondered on my frock, and my sire, who presently
Should come and take my measure. It happened otherwise.
The marplot de'il himself had sworn
It should not be, so it would seem,
Nor holy gown by me be worn.

Wherefore my steps he guided to a quiet court and dim,
Drove me across, and bade me stop
Under a ladder, slight and tall,
Where a pretty peasant maiden, roosted against the wall,
Was dressing pouting pigeons, there atop.

Oft as I saw a woman, in the times whereof I write,
Slid a tremor through my veins, and across my dreary day
There flashed a sudden vision on my sight
Of a life all *velvet*, so to say;
Thus, when I saw Catrine (rosy she was and sweet),
I was fain to mount a bit, till I discerned
A pair of comely legs, a pair of snowy feet,
And all my silly heart within me burned.
One tell-tale sigh I gave, and my damsel veered, alas! —
Then huddled up with piteous cries;
The ladder snapped before my eyes.
She fell! — escape for me none was!
And there we twain lay sprawling upon the court-yard floor,
I under and she o'er!

The outcries of the maid soon brought all the holy household to the spot. "Fillo aymo a fa sabé lous pecats que fay fa," remarks Jasmin, in a quaint parenthesis, which, by the way, illustrates very well the conciseness of expression of which his dialect is capable. It means, "A girl always likes to have the sins known which she has caused others to commit." The result of her railing accusation is a terrific reprimand for poor Jacques, and a sentence of imprisonment for the remainder of the carnival. In default of a dungeon they locked him into a dismal little chamber, where he remained until

the next day, very angry and very hungry, until chance enabled him to fill up the measure of his iniquities by breaking into a high cupboard, to which he climbed with the help of table and chair, and feasting upon sundry pots of the delicious convent preserves, which he found hidden there.

The result must be told in his own words: —

But while so dulcet vengeance is wrought me by my stars,
What step is this upon the stair? Who fumbles at the bars?
Alackaday! Who opes the door?
The dread superior himself! And he my pardon bore!

Thou knowest the Florence Lion, — the famous picture, where
The mother sees, in stark despair,
The onslaught of the monster wild
Who will devour her darling child;
And, fury in her look, nor heeding life the least,
With piercing cry, "My boy!" leaps on the savage beast;
Who, wondering and withstood,
Seemeth to quench the burning of his cruel thirst for blood,
And the baby is released.
Just so the reverend canon, with madness in his eye,
Sprang on my wretched self, and "My sweetmeats!" was his cry;

And the nobler lion's part, alas, was not for me!
For the jar was empty half, and the bottom plain to see!

"Out of this house, thou imp of hell,
Thou 'rt past forgiveness now! Dream not of such a thing!"
And the old canon summoning
His forces, shook my ladder well.
Then with a quaking heart, I turned me to descend,
Still by one handle holding tight
The fatal jar, which dropped outright
And shattered, and so came the end!

Behold me now, in dire disgrace,
An outcast in the street, in the merry carnival,
As black as any Moor, with all
The sweetmeat-stains upon my face!
My woes, meseemed, were just begun.
"Ho for the masque!" a *gamin* cried;
Full desperately did I run,
But a mob of howling urchins thronged me on every side,
Raised at my heels a cloud of dust,
And roared, "The masque is full of must!"
As on the wind's own pinions borne
I fled, and gained our cot forlorn,
And in among my household burst,
Starved, dripping, dead with rage and thirst.

Uprose a cry of wonderment from sisters, mother, sire.
And while we kissed I told them all, whereon a silence fell.
Seeing bean-porridge on the fire,

I said I would my hunger quell.
Wherefore then did they make as though they heard not me,
Standing death still? At last arose my mother dear,
Most anxiously, most tenderly.
"Why are we tarrying?" said she,
"No more will come. Our all is here."

But I, "No more of what? Ah, tell me, for God's sake!" —
Sorely the mystery made me quake, —
"What wast thou waiting, mother mild?"
I trembled, for I guessed. And she, "The loaf, my child!"
So I had ta'en their bread away! O squalor and distress!
Accursed sweetmeats! Naughty feet!
I am base indeed! O silence full of bitterness!
Gentles, who pitying weep for every woe ye meet,
My anguish ye may guess!

No money and no loaf! A sorry tale, I ween.
Gone was my hunger now, but in my aching heart,
I seemed to feel a cruel smart,
A stab, as of a brand, fire-new[1] and keen,
Rending the scabbard it is shut within.

Silent I stood awhile, and my mother blankly scanned,
While she, as in a dream, gazed on her own left hand;
Then put her Sunday kerchief by,
And rose and spake right cheerily,

[1] "*Sabre flamben nèou.*" The expression is interesting as indicating the origin of the degenerate phrase, *bran' fire new.*

And left us for a while; and when she came once more,
Beneath her arm a little loaf she bore.

Then all anew a-talking fell,
And to the table turned. Ah, well!
They laughed, but I was full of thought,
And evermore my wandering eyes the mother sought.
Sorry was I and mute, for a doubt that me possessed,
And drowned the noisy clamor of the rest.
But what I longed to see perpetually withdrew
And shyly hid from view,
Until, at last, soup being done,
My gentle mother made a move
As she would cut the loaf, signing the cross above.
Then stole I one swift look the dear left hand upon,
And ah, it was too true! — the wedding-ring was gone!

Once more the poet breaks off his narrative abruptly, but when he resumes it for the third and last chapter of his "Souvenirs" his tone expresses relief, nay, even a kind of modest triumph. One year later behold him apprenticed to a hair-dresser, an *artisto-en-piels*, with whom he works faithfully all day, but requests us to observe how the leaves of the tall elm outside the barber's back attic window shine at midnight. Thanks to his convent schooling he could read; the remnant of daylight after work was done became all insufficient; his savings

went to the oil-merchant, and the best pleasure of his life was born.

For ever, as I read, came throngs of phantoms fair,
With wonder-web of dreams o'er grievous thoughts to fling,
Till passed away in silence those memories of despair,
The wallet, and the almshouse, and the ring.

Those three painful images were not quite exorcised, and all his life long returned at gloomy intervals to haunt him, but he had freed himself from their malign spell. Soon came first love, still further to beautify existence. "It was for *her* sake," says Jasmin, "that I first tried to make verses in the sweet *patois* which she talked so well, verses wherein I asked her in lofty and mysterious phrases to be my guardian angel." A little farther on he thus describes what is always an era in the life of a poet: —

One beauteous eve in summer, when the world was all abroad,
Swept onward by the human stream that toward the palace bore,
Unthinkingly the way I trod,
And followed eager hundreds o'er
The threshold of an open door.

Good Heaven! where was I? What might mean
The lifting of that linen screen?
O lovely, lovely vision! O country strange and fair!
How they sing in yon bright world! and how sweetly talk they too!
Can ears attend the music rare,
Or eyes embrace the dazzling view?
"Why, yon is Cinderella!" I shouted in my maze.
"Silence!" quoth he who sat by me.
"Why, then? Where are we, sir? What is this whereon we gaze?"
"Thou idiot! This is the *Comedy!*"

Ah, yes! I knew that magic name,
Full oft at school had heard the same;
And fast the fevered pulses flew
In my low room the dark night through.
"O fatherland of poesy! O paradise of love!
Thou art a dream to me no more! Thy mighty spell I prove.
And thee, sweet Cinderella, my guardian I make,
And to-morrow I turn player for thy sake!"

But slumber came at dawn, and next the flaming look
Of my master, who awoke me. How like a leaf I shook!
"Where wast thou yesternight? Answer me, ne'er-do-weel!
And wherefore home at midnight steal?"
"Oh, sir, how glorious was the play!"
"The *play*, indeed! 'T is very true what people say:
Thou art stark crazy, wretched boy,
To make so vile an uproar through all the livelong night!
To sing and spout, and rest of sober souls destroy.
Thou who hast worn a cassock, nor blushest for thy plight!

Thou 'lt come to grief, I warn thee so!
Quit shop, mayhap, and turn thyself a player low!"
"Ay, master dear, that would I be!"
"What, what? Hear I aright?" said he.
"Art blind? and dost not know the gate
That leadeth to the *almshouse* straight?"
At this terrific word, the heart in me went down
As though a club had fallen thereon;
And Cinderella fled her throne in my light head.
The pang I straightway did forget;
And yet, meseems, yon awful threat
Made softer evermore my attic bed.

By the time he was eighteen, Jasmin had sown his modest crop of wild oats, and opened a barber's shop of his own, and the maiden who had inspired his first verses had promised to marry him. "Two angels took up their abode with me then," he says. His wife was one, and the other was his rustic muse, the angel of homely, pastoral poetry, —

Who, fluttering softly from on high,
Raised on her wing and bore me far
Where fields of balmiest ether are.
There, in the shepherd lassie's speech
I sang a song, or shaped a rhyme;
There learned I stranger lore than I can teach.
O mystic lessons! Happy time!
And fond farewells I said, when at the close of day
Silent she led my spirit back whence it was borne away.

A few words are given to his wedding; and then he adds, —

> The rest, methinks, full well is known;
> How doubly blest my life hath been
> In plenty and in peace, how fifteen times have flown
> The seasons four since then.
> Curl-papers now, and songs anon,
> Into my little shop had drawn
> Erelong a rill of silver fine;
> So that in frenzy all divine
> I rose at last, and brake that barber's chair of mine!

No wonder that, after such an experience, he retorts with spirit and scorn, when he reads in a journal the malicious remark that "Pegasus is a beast who carries poets to the almshouse." On the contrary, he says, Pegasus conveyed him to a notary's place, and it is owing to that friendly steed alone that he figures first of his family on the tax-gatherer's list; albeit he admits that the last-named honor has its disadvantages. He also confesses frankly that his house is yet unfinished, but assures us that his wife, who at first rather deprecated his verse-making, now sees a joist in every stanza and a tile in every rhyme, and hands him his pens quite officiously. And the homely reminiscences which have fluctuated

so fast between laughter and tears, close with a droll story of the wrath and amazement in his father's household when they learned that he had been described, in the public print, as a "son of Apollo:"—

My sire leaped as if shot, and roared, "How's this, Catrine?
Is my son not my son? Make answer what they mean!"
"Thine is he, then," she said, and her cheeks with wrath were red;
"My poor old Jean, be comforted!
I never loved a man but thee."—
"And who then may this rascal 'Pollo be?"
"Nay, that I know not! Girls, have ye heard of yonder rake?"
"Not we!" My sisters tossed their caps while scornfully they spake.
"'T is some old wretch, belike, should be cited to attend
The court. Where lives he, brother?" I, willing to defend
My good old master, 'Pollo, from the fury of their spleen,
Ere they could march him sadly off, two grim hussars between,
Before the justice to appear,
Was fain to make the poet's meaning clear.
Long time they doubted; but when I
Had told them many a tale from the old mythology,
Reluctantly they let the case go by.

Thus, reader, have I told my tale in cantos three.
Small risk my muse hath run; a thrifty singer, she.

For though Pegasus should rear and fling me, it is clear,
However ruffled all my fancies fair,
And though my time I lose, my verses I may use;
For paper still will serve for curling hair !

I have been thus copious in illustrating Jasmin's "Souvenirs," because the poem gives the actual outlines of his extraordinary life, and reflects without reserve the humor, the sensibility, and the extreme simple-heartedness of the man. In order to understand the real scope of his genius, its depth and strength, his fertility in romantic and picturesque incident, his shrewdness in reading character and his dramatic skill in representing it, in what divine innocence of established canons the greater part of his work is done, and in what implicit obedience to the few which he knows the remainder, we must study his graver and what might be called his more ambitious pieces, if he did not always impress one as too spontaneous for ambition. Of one of these, "The Blind Girl of Castèl-Cuillé," we are fortunate in possessing Mr. Longfellow's complete and very close and beautiful version. There are at least two other poems of Jasmin's, "Françonette" and "Marthe

La Folle," which fully deserve to rank with "The Blind Girl" in dignity of theme and treatment, and some illustrations of one of these will be given in the next chapter.

JACQUES JASMIN.

II.

I MUST beg leave to remark in passing that I have constantly recurring doubts about the fitness for English verse, especially in earnest and impassioned narrative, of the Alexandrine or iambic hexameter, which forms the basis of all Jasmin's longer poems. It is, however, difficult to find a substitute for it. The iambic pentameter, our natural narrative metre, is one foot shorter, and the Gascon of Jasmin is not easily condensed. Moreover, the pentameter does not lend itself readily to rhythmic variations and caprices, and so I am fain, though diffidently, still to follow the movement of the original.

In a preface, dated July 4, 1840, Jasmin dedicated the poem of "Françonette" to the city of Toulouse, thereby expressing his gratitude for a banquet given him in 1836 by the leading citizens of that place, at which the president of the day had given the toast, "Jasmin, the

adopted son of Toulouse." The action of the poem begins during the persecutions of the French Protestants in the sixteenth century. Blaise de Montluc, Marshal of France, after putting men, women, and children of the Huguenots indiscriminately to the sword, had shut himself up in the Château d'Estillac, and was understood to be devoting himself to religious exercises; "taking the sacrament while dripping with fraternal blood," says the poet.

Now the shepherds in those days, and every shepherd lass,
At the bare name of Huguenot, would shiver with affright
Amid their loves and laughter. So then it came to pass
In a hamlet nestling underneath a castled height,
On the day of Roquefort fête, while Sunday bells outrang,
The jocund youth danced all together,
And, to a fife, the praises sang
Of Saint James and the August weather, —
That bounteous month which year by year,
Through dew-fall of the even clear
And fire of tropic noons, doth bring
Both grapes and figs to ripening.

'T was the very finest fête that eyes had ever seen
In the shadow of the vast and leafy parasol
Where aye the country-folk convene.
O'erflowing were the spaces all;

Down cliff, up dale, from every home
In Montagnac or Saint Colombe,
Still they come,
Too many far to number;
More and more, more and more, while flames the sunshine o'er.
But there 's room for all, their coming will not cumber;
For the fields will be their inn, and the little hillocks green
The couches of their slumber.

Among them came Françonette, the belle of the country-side, concerning whom we are besought to allow the poet just two words.

Never you fancy, gentles, howe'er it seem to you,
This was a soft and pensive creature, —
Lily-fair in every feature,
With tender eyes and languishing, half-shut and heaven blue;
With light and slender shape in languor ever swaying,
Like a weeping willow with a limpid fountain playing, —
Not so, my masters; Françonette
Had vivid, flashing orbs, like the stars in heaven set;
And the laughing cheeks were round, whereon a lover might
Gather in handfuls roses bright;
Brown locks and curly decked her head;
Her lips were as the cherry red;
Whiter than snow her teeth; her feet
How softly moulded, small and fleet!

How light her limbs! Ah, well-a-day!
What if the whole at once I say?
Hers was the very head ideal
Grafted on woman of this earth, most fair and real!

Such a miracle, the poet says, may be wrought in any rank or race, to the envy of maidens and the despair of men. All the swains in a wide region about Roquefort admired Françonette, and the girl knew it; and it made her beauty shine the brighter. Yet she felt her triumph to be incomplete, until Pascal, the handsomest of them all, and incomparably the best singer, who hitherto had held somewhat aloof, should fairly acknowledge her sway. Her good old grandmother, with whom she lived (for her mother was dead, and her father had disappeared in her own infancy, and his fate was unknown), detected her coquettish manœuvres and reproved them.

"Child, child," she used to frown,
"A meadow 's not a parlor, and the country 's not the town!
And thou knowest that we promised thee lang-syne
To the soldier-lad, Marcel, who is lover true of thine.
So curb thy flights, thou giddy one;
For the maid who covets all, in the end, mayhap, hath none."

"Nay, nay," replied the tricksy fay,
With swift caress and laughter gay
Darting upon the dame, "there 's another saw well known.
Time enough, granny dear, to love some later day!
Meanwhile, *she who hath only one hath none.*"

Now such a course, you may divine,
Made hosts of melancholy swains,
Who sighed and suffered jealous pains,
Yet never sang reproachful strains
Like learned lovers when they pine;
Who, ere they go away to die, their woes write carefully
On willow or on poplar tree.
Good lack! these could not shape a letter,
And the silly souls, though lovesick, to death did not incline,
Deeming to live and suffer on were better!
But tools were handled clumsily,
And vine-sprays blew abroad at will,
And trees were pruned exceeding ill,
And many a furrow drawn awry.

Methinks you know her now, this fair and foolish girl;
Watch while she treads one measure, then! See, see her dip and twirl!
Young Étienne holds her hand by chance;
'T is the first rigadoon they dance.
With parted lips, right thirstily
Each rustic tracks them where they fly;
And the damsel sly
Feels every eye,
And lighter moves for each adoring glance.

Holy cross, what a sight! when the madcap rears aright
Her shining lizard's head, and her Spanish foot falls light,
And when the wasp-like figure sways
And swims and whirls and springs again,
And the wind with a corner of the blue kerchief plays,
One and all smack their lips, and the cheeks whereon they gaze
Would fain salute with kisses twain.
And some one shall; for here the ancient custom is,
Who tires his partner out may leave her with a kiss;
Now girls turn weary when they will, always and everywhere;
Wherefore already Jean and Paul,
Louis, Guillaume, Pierre,
Have breathless yielded up their place
Without the coveted embrace.

It is now the turn of Marcel, the big, blustering soldier, comely enough in feature, "straight as an I," boastful and vain, who makes a claim to the hand of Françonette, which the village belle has never allowed. He has tried all manner of clumsy stratagems to entrap her into a formal acceptance. He has ostentatiously paraded every smile which he has won from any other damsel in the vain hope of exciting her jealousy; and now, having witnessed the discomfiture of so many of his rivals, strides forward and takes her hand with an air of intense confidence

and satisfaction. The dance begins anew, and is watched with breathless interest. On they go for an incredible while, and Françonette apparently grows fresher with every figure, but the Herculean soldier is tired out at last, turns giddy, and reels: —

Then darted forth Pascal into the soldier's place.
Two steps they take, one change they make, and Françonette,
Weary at last, with laughing grace
Her foot stayed and upraised her face;
Tarried Pascal that kiss to set?
Not he, be sure! and all the crowd
His victory hailed with plaudits loud.
The clapping of their palms like battledores resounded,
While Pascal stood among them as confounded.
How then Marcel, who truly loved the wayward fair?
Him the kiss maddened. Springing, measuring with his eye,
"Pascal," he thundered forth, "beware!
Not so fast, churl!" and therewith brutally let fly,
With aim unerring, one fierce blow
Straight in the other's eyes, doubling the insult so.

A shadow as of a thunder-cloud fell on the merry fête. "A man need not be a *monsieur*," says Jasmin, "to resent an insult;" and the fiery Pascal returned the blow with interest. Directly,

with a zest which would appear to be peculiarly Gascon, the two engaged on the spot in a terrific duel. They fought for a long time without decided advantage on either side, the sympathies of the on-lookers being mostly with Pascal, until suddenly there appeared among them a "gentleman all gleaming with gold," no other than the lord of the manor, the Baron of Roquefort himself, who sternly separated the combatants. The young shepherds cheered the wounded Pascal to his dwelling, while Marcel turned silently away vowing vengeance on them all, and swearing that Françonette should marry no man but him.

The next canto opens in mid-winter, when notice is carried round by Jean the tambourinist, among the country-folk, now secluded upon their comparatively silent farms, of a grand *busking*,[1] followed by a dance, to take place on Friday, the last night of the year.

[1] The *buscou*, or busking, was a kind of *bee* at which the young people assembled, bringing the thread of their late spinning, which was divided into skeins of the proper size by a broad, thin plate of steel or whalebone called a *busc*. The same thing under precisely the same name figured in the toilets of our grandmothers, and hence, probably, the Scotch use of the verb "to busk or attire."

But when the Friday came, a frozen dew was raining,
And by a fireless forge a mother sat complaining;
And to her son, who stood thereby,
Spoke out at last entreatingly:
"Hast forgot the summer day, my boy, when thou didst come,
All bleeding from the fray, to the sound of music home?
Ah! go not forth, Pascal! I have dreamed of flowers again,
And what means that but tears and pain?"
"Now art thou craven, mother! and seest life all black.
But wherefore tremble, since Marcel is gone and comes not back?"
"Oh yet, my son, take heed, I pray,
For the Wizard of the Black Wood is roaming round this way, —
The same who wrought such harm a year agone.
And, they tell me, there was seen coming from his cave at dawn,
But two days past, a soldier. Now,
What if that were Marcel? Oh, child, take care, take care!
The mothers all give charms unto their sons: do thou
Take mine; but, I beseech, go not forth anywhere!"
"Just for one hour mine eyes to set
On friend Thomas! No more, my mother."
"Thy friend, indeed! Nay, nay! Thou meanest on Françonette.
Dreamest I cannot see thou lovest no other?
Go to! I read it in thine eyes.
Though thou singest and art gay, thy secret bravely keeping,
That I may not be sad, yet all alone thou 'rt weeping.
My heart aches for thy miseries;

Yet leave her for thy good, Pascal!
She would so scorn a smith like thee,
With sire grown old in penury:
For poor we are; thou knowest all, —
How we have sold and sold till barely a scythe remains.
Oh, dark the days this house hath seen,
Pascal, since thou hast ailing been!
Now thou art well, arouse thee! do something for our gains;
Or rest thee, if thou wilt; we can suffer, we can fight:
But, for God's love, go thou not forth to-night!"

After a short struggle with himself, Pascal yielded, and turned away to his forge in silent dejection, and soon the anvil was ringing, and the sparks were flying, while away down in the village the busking went merrily on. "If the prettiest were always the most capable," says the sensible poet, "how much my Françonette would have accomplished;" but, instead, she flitted from place to place, idle and gay, jesting, singing, and, as usual, bewitching all. At last Thomas, the friend of whom Pascal had spoken to his mother, asked leave to sing a song; and, fixing his keen eyes upon the coquette, he began in tones of lute-like sweetness: —

THE SIREN WITH THE HEART OF ICE.

Thou whom the swains environ,
  O maid of wayward will,
O icy-hearted siren,
The hour we all desire when
  Thou too, thou too shalt feel!
Thy gay wings thou dost flutter,
Thy airy nothings utter,
While the crowd can only mutter,
    In ecstasy complete,
    At thy feet.
Yet hark to one who proves thee
  Thy victories are vain,
Until a heart that loves thee
  Thou hast learned to love again!

Sunshine, the heavens adorning,
  We welcome with delight;
But thy sweet face returning,
With every Sunday morning,
  Is yet a rarer sight.
We love thy haughty graces,
Thy swallow-like swift paces,
Thy song the soul upraises,
    Thy lips, thine eyes, thy hair, —
    All are fair.
Yet hark to one who proves thee, etc.

Thy going from them widows
  All places utterly.

The hedgerows and the meadows
Turn scentless; gloomy shadows
  Discolor the blue sky.
Then, when thou comest again,
Farewell fatigue and pain!
Life glows in every vein.
    O'er every slender finger
    We would linger.
Yet hark to one who proves thee, etc.

Thy pet dove, in his flitting,
  Doth warn thee, lady fair!
Thee, in the wood forgetting;
Brighter for his dim setting
  He shinès, for love is there!
Love is the life of all,
Oh answer thou his call,
Lest the flower of thy days fall,
    And the grace whereof we wot
    Be forgot!
For, till great love shall move thee,
  Thy victories are vain.
'T is little men should love thee;
  Learn thou to love again.

There arose a clamor of approbation and cries for the name of the composer, which Thomas gave without hesitation — Pascal. Françonette was unwontedly touched, and yet more when, in reply to some inquiry about his absence that night, she heard Thomas explaining that his

friend had been six months ill from the severe wound which he received in defence of Françonette; and that the family, dependent on his labor, had sunk into extreme poverty. But she concealed her emotion sedulously, and was in the midst of a game of *sarro coutelou*, *cache couteau*, or hunt the slipper, and the life of it, when a sudden misfortune interrupted their sport. Amid her struggles to free herself from Laurent, — who had caught her and was claiming the customary forfeit, — Françonette caused him to slip on the floor, and it presently appeared that his arm was broken. Precisely at this unlucky moment, a sombre apparition dawned on the assembly: —

A grim old man above them peered,
With girdle swept by flowing beard;
'T was the Black Forest Wizard ! All knew him, and all feared.
" Wretches," he said, " I am come from my gloomy rocks up yonder
To open your eyes, being filled with ruth for you, and wonder!
You all adore this Françonette,
Learn who she is, infatuate! —
Her sire, a poor man and an evil,
While yet the babe in cradle sate,
Went over to the Huguenots, and sold her to the Devil !

Her mother is dead of grief and shame,
And thus the demon plays his game: —
  Full closely doth he guard his slave,
Unseen, he tracks her high and low.
See Laurent and Pascal! Did both not come to woe,
  Just for one light embrace she gave?
Be warned in time! For whoso dares this maid to wed,
Amid the brief delight of his first nuptial night,
Suddenly hears a dreadful thunder-peal o'erhead!
    The Demon cometh in his might
    To snatch the bride away in flight,
And leave the ill-starred bridegroom — dead."

The wizard spake no more, but angry fiery rays,
From the scars his visage bore, seemed suddenly to blaze.
  Four times he turned his heel upon,
Then bade the door stand wide or ever his foot he stayed.
With one long groan the door obeyed,
  And lo, the bearded man was gone!

But left what horror in his wake! None stirred in all that throng.
Only the stricken maid herself stood brave against her wrong;
  And in the hope forlorn that all might pass for jest,
With tremulous smile, half bright, half pleading,
  She swept them with her eyes, and two steps forward pressed:
But when she saw them all receding,
And heard them say, "Avaunt!" her fate
She knew. Then did her eyes dilate

With speechless terror more and more;
The while her heart beat fast and loud,
Till with a cry her head she bowed,
And sank in swoon upon the floor.

It is very characteristic of Jasmin that he pauses at this crisis of the story, earnestly to explain and excuse the dense superstition of his country-folk at that period, whereby it came to pass that the once radiant and triumphant Françonette was shunned thenceforward as an accursed thing. These frequent confidences of the poet with his reader are so perfectly unstudied that they add wonderfully to the *vraisemblance* of his tale. The third canto opens with a lovely picture of a cottage by a leafy brook-side in Estanquet, one of the hamlets adjacent to Roquefort (and where tradition still identifies the home of Françonette). There, when the next spring opened, the "jealous birds" listened in vain for a girlish voice, the music of which in years gone by had been sweeter than their own. At last the nightingales, more curious than the rest, made their way into the maid's garden, — and what did they see? Her straw hat lay on a bench; there

was no ribbon about the crown. Her rake and watering-pot were dropped among her neglected jonquils; the branches of her rose-trees ran riot. Peering yet farther, even inside the cottage-door, these curious birds discovered an old woman asleep in an arm-chair, and a pale, quiet girl beside her, who, from time to time, let fall a tear upon her little hands. "It is Françonette," says the poet. "You will have guessed that already."

On the terrible New-Year's Eve just described, when Françonette had fled for shelter to the arms of her good old grandmother, the latter had soothed her as best she might, by solemn assurances that the sorcerer's cruel charge was false. But how could it be proved so, save by Françonette's father, whose whereabouts no one knew, even if he were alive, so long ago had he vanished from the place? For the remainder of the winter the two women lived almost alone, neglected by all their neighbors, and scarce venturing abroad. Only with the return of spring, one sweet gleam of hope had come to Françonette with the rumor that Pascal defended her everywhere, and boldly declared her to be the

victim of a brutal plot. She was dreaming of his goodness even now, and it was this which had softened her proud spirit to tears. But her trance was dispelled by a sudden, sharp cry from the aged sleeper:—

Then sprang she to her side and found her open-eyed,
And caught the awesome word, "Is the wall *not* all a-flame?"
And then, "Ah, 't was a dream! Thank God!" the murmur came.
"Dear heart," the girl said softly, "what was this dream of thine?"
"O love, 't was night; and loud, ferocious men, me-thought,
Were lighting fires all round our cot,
And thou didst cry unto them, daughter mine,
To save *me;* but didst vainly strive,
And here we two must burn alive!
Oh torment that I bare! How shall I cure my fright?
Come hither, darling, let me hold thee tight!"

Then the white-headed dame, in withered arms of love,
Long time with yearning tenderness
Folded the brown-haired girl, who strove
By many a smile and mute caress
To hearten her, until at length
The aged one cried out, for that love gave her strength,
"Sold to the demon? Thou! It is a hideous lie!
Wherefore weep not so patiently

And childlike, but take heart once more,
For thou art lovelier than before.
Take granny's word for that! Arise,
Go forth! Who hides from envious eyes
The thirst of envy slakes. I have heard so o'er and o'er!
Also I know full well there is one who loves thee yet;
Only a word he waiteth to claim thee for his own.
Thou likest not Marcel? But he could guard thee, pet,
And I am all too feeble grown.
Or stay, my darling, stay! To-morrow 's Easter day;
Go thou to Mass, and pray as ne'er before!
Then take the blessed bread, if so the good God may
The precious favor of his former smile restore;
And, on thy sweet face, clear as day,
Prove thou art numbered with his children evermore."
Then such a light of hope lit the faded face again,
Furrowed so deep with years and pain,
That, falling on her neck, the maiden promised well;
And once more on the white cot silence fell.

When, therefore, on the morrow, came all the country-side
To list the hallelujahs in the Church of Saint-Pierre,
Great was their wonderment who spied
The maiden Françonette silently kneeling there,
Telling her beads with downcast eyes of prayer.
She hath need, poor little thing, Heaven's mercy to implore!
Never a woman's will she win,
For these, beholding her sweet mien,
And Marcel and Pascal who eyed her fondly o'er,

Smote her with glances black as night;
Then, shrinking back, left her alone,
Midway of a great circle, as they might
Some guilty and condemnèd one,
Branded upon his brow in sight.
Nor was this all. A man well known,
Warden and uncle to Marcel,
Carried the blessèd Easter bread,
And like a councillor did swell
In long-tailed coat, with pompous tread.
But when the trembling maid, signing the cross, essayed
To take a double portion, as the dear old grandame bade,
Right in the view of every eye
The sacred basket he withdrew, and passed her wholly by.
And so, denied her portion of the bread whereby we live,
She, on glad Easter, doth receive
Dismissal from God's house for aye!
Death-sick with fear, she deemeth all is lost indeed.
But no, — she hath a friend at need.
Pascal hath seen her all the while;
Pascal's young foot is on the aisle;
He is making the quest, and, nothing loath,
In view of uncle and of nephew, both,
Quietly doth to her present
Upon a silver plate, with fair flowers blossoming,
The crown-piece[1] of the holy element, —
And all the world beholds the thing.

[1] A custom formerly prevailed in some parts of France, and was brought thence by emigrants to Canada, where it flourished not long ago, of crowning the sacramental bread by one or more frosted, or otherwise ornamented, cakes, which were reserved for the family of the *Seigneur*, or other communicants of distinction.

O moment full of sweetness! Her blood sprang into
fleetness,
Warmth was in all her frame, and her senses thrilled
once more,
As the body of God, arisen
Out of its deathly prison,
Could life unto her own restore.
But wherefore did her brow suddenly rosy grow?
Because the angel of love, I trow,
Did with his glowing breath impart
Life to the flame long smouldering in her wayward heart, —
Because a something strange, and passing all desire,
As honey sweet, and quick as fire,
Did her sad soul illuminate
With a new being; and, though late,
She knew the name of her delight, —
The fair enigma she could guess.
People and priest vanished from sight,
And she saw in all the church only one man aright, —
He whom she loved at last with utmost gratefulness.

Leave we the throng dispersing, and eagerly conversing
Of all I here have been rehearsing,
But lose not sight of her at all,
Who hath borne the *bread of honor* to the ancient dame
ere this,
And sitteth now alone, shut in her chamber small,
Face to face with her new-found bliss.

First fall of happy dew the parchèd lands to quicken,
First mild sun-ray in winter, ye are less welcome far
Unto the earth with sorrow stricken
Than these mysterious transports are

To the dazed maiden dreaming there,
Forgetful of her heavy care,
And softly in her spirit moving
To the flame-new delight of loving.

From evil tongues withdrawn, did she —
As do we all — sink open-eyed in reverie,
And built, with neither hammer nor stone,
A small fair castle of her own,
Where shone all things in Pascal's light, and cheer and rest
Flowed like a living brook. Ah, yes, the sage was right!
The sorrowing heart aye loveth best.
But when the heart controls us quite,
Quick turns to gall the honey of our delight.
Suddenly she remembers all! Her heaven turns gray;
A dread thought smites her heavily, —
To dream of love? Why, what is she?
Sweet love is not for her! The mighty sorcerer
Hath said she is sold for a price, — a foredoomed murderer
With a heart of devilish wrath, which whoso dares to brave,
And lie one night in her arms, therein shall find his grave.
She to see Pascal perish at her side?
"O my good God, have pity on me!" she cried.

So, rent with cruel agonies
And weeping very sore,
Fell the poor child upon her knees
Her little shrine before.

"O holy Virgin," sighing, "on thee alone relying
I come. I am all astray! Father and mother too
Are dead lang syne, and I accursed! All tongues are crying
The hideous tale! yet save, if haply it be true;
Or if they have falsely sworn, be it on my soul borne
When I shall bring my taper to thy church[1] on *fête*-day morn.
Then, blessed mother, let me see
That I am not denied of thee!"

Brief prayer and broken,
If truly spoken,
Doth lightly up to heaven fly.
Sure to have won a gracious ear
The maid her purpose holds, and ponders momently,
And oftentimes turns sick, and cannot speak for fear,
But sometimes taketh heart, and sudden hope and strong
Shines in her soul, as a meteor gleams the night along.

So ends the third canto, and the fourth and last begins with the dawn of the *fête* day on which are fixed Françonette's desperate hopes and fears. The inhabitants of half-a-dozen villages, — Puymirol, Artigues, Astaffort, Lusignan, Cardonnet, Saint-Cirge, and Roquefort,

[1] Notre Dame de bon Encontre, a church in the suburbs of Agen celebrated for its legend, its miracles, and the numerous pilgrimages which are annually made to it in the month of May.

with priests and crucifixes, garlands and candles, banners and *angels*,[1] are mustering at the church of Notre Dame in Agen, and somehow, not only is the tale rife among them of the maiden who has been sold to the demon, but the rumor circulates that to-day she will publicly entreat the blessed Virgin to save her. The strangers are kinder to her than her more immediate neighbors, and from many a pitying heart the prayer goes up that a miracle may be wrought in the beautiful girl's behalf. She feels their sympathy and gathers confidence. And now the special suppliants are passing up to the altar one by one, — anxious mothers, disappointed lovers, the orphaned, and the childless. They kneel, they ask for their blessing, they present their candles for the old surpliced priest to bless, and they retire: —

Nor did a sign of sorrow on any suppliant fall,
But with lightened hearts of hope their ways went one and all.
So Françonette grew happy too,
And most of all, because Pascal prayed smiling in her view;

[1] The *angels* walked in procession and sang the *Angelus* at the appropriate hours.

Yea, dared to raise her eyes to the holy father's own;
For it seemed to her that love and lights and hymns and incense, too,
Were crying "grace," in sweet unison.
And she sighed, "Oh, grace divine, and love! — let these be mine!"
Then straightway lit her taper and followed to the shrine,
Bearing flowers in her other hand; and every one
Kindly gave place, and bade her forward move,
Then fixed their eyes upon the priest and her,
And scarce a breath was drawn, and not a soul did stir,
While the priest laid the image of redeeming love
Upon the orphan's lips. But, ere her kiss was given,
Brake a terrific peal, as it would rend the heaven,
Darkening her taper and three altar-lights above!
Oh, what is this? The crashing thunder,
The prayer denied, the lights put out.
"Good God! she is sold indeed! All, all is true, no doubt!"
So a long murmur rose, of horror and of wonder;
And while the maiden breathlessly,
Cowering like a lost soul their shuddering glances under,
Crept forth, all shrank away and let her pass them by.

Howbeit, that great peal was but the opening blow
Of a wild storm and terrible
That straightway upon Roquefort fell.
The spire of Saint-Pierre[1] was laid in ruin low.
And, smitten by the sharp scourge of the hail,
In all the region round men could but weep and wail.

[1] The ancient parish church of Roquefort, whose ruins only now remain.

The angel-bands who walked that day
In fair procession, hymns to sing,
Turned sorrowing, all save one, away,
Ora pro nobis murmuring.

But in those early times, not yet, as now,
Her perilous waves to clear,
To other jealous towns could stately Agen show
Great bridges three, as she a royal city were, —
Two simple barges only, by poles propellèd slow,
Waited the sacred minstrels to bear them to Roquefort,
To whom came rumors of the wide-spread woe,
Ere landing they were ranged for singing on the shore.
And first the tale but half they heed;
But soon they see, in very deed,
Vineyards and happy fields with hopeless ruin smit.
Then each let fall his banner fair,
And lamentations infinite
Rent on all sides the evening air,
Till, o'er the swelling throng rose deadly clear the cry,
"And still we spare this Françonette!" Then suddenly,
As match to powder laid, the word
Set all on fire, and there were heard
Howls of "Ay, ay, the wretch! now let her meet her fate!
She is the cause of all, 't is plain!
Once hath she made us desolate,
But verily shall not so again."
And ever the press grew, and wilder, angrier, too,
And "Hunt her off the face of the earth!" shrieked one anew.

"Ay, hunt her to death! 'T is meet!" a thousand tongues
repeat;
And the tempest in the skies cannot with this compete.
Oh, then, to have seen them as they came
With clenchèd fists and eyes aflame,
You had said, "Hell doth indeed its demons all unchain."
And while the storm recedes, and the night is growing
clear,
Hot poison shoots through every vein
Of the possessèd madmen here.

Thus goaded they themselves to crime; but where was
she,
Unhappy Françonette? To her own cottage driven,
She worshipped her one relic, sadly, dreamily,
And whispered to the withered flowers Pascal had given,
"Dear nosegay, when I saw thee first,
Methought thy sweetness was divine,
And I did drink it, heart-athirst;
But now thou art not sweet as erst,
Because these wicked thoughts of mine
Have blasted all thy beauty rare.
I am sold to the powers of ill, and Heaven hath spurned
my prayer!
My love is deadly love! No hope on earth have I!
So, treasure of my heart, flowers of the meadow fair,
Because I love the hand that gathered you, good-by!
Pascal must not love such as I!
He must the accursèd maid forswear,
Who yet to God for him doth cry.
In wanton merriment last year

Even at love laughed Franconette;
Now is my condemnation clear.
Now whom I love, I must forget.
Sold to the demon at my birth, —
My God, how can it be? Have I not faith in thee?
O blessed blossoms of the earth,
Let me drive with my cross the evil one from me!
And thou, my mother, in the starry skies above,
And thou, my guardian, Mother of God,
Pity! I love Pascal! Must part from him I love!
Pity the maid accursèd, by the rod
Sore smitten, to the earth down-trod;
Help me the heart divine to move!"

"Franconette, little one, what means thy plaintive moan?"
So spake the hoary dame. "Didst thou not smiling say
Our Lady did receive thy offering to-day?
But sure, no happy heart e'er made so sad a moan!
Thou hast deceived me! Some new ill," she said,
"Hath fallen upon us!" "Nay, not so. Be comforted;
I — I — am happy." "So, my deary,
God grant some respite we may have,
For sorrow of thine doth dig my grave,
And this hath been a lonesome, fearsome day, and weary;
That cruel dream of the fire I had a while ago,
However I strove, did haunt me so!
And then, thou knowest the storm; anew I was terrified,
So that to-night, meseems, I shudder at nought" —

What sudden roar is this outside?
"Fire! Fire! Let us burn them in their cot!"
Shine all the cracks in the old shutter gaping wide;

And Françonette springs to the doorway tremblingly,
And, gracious Heaven! what doth she see?
By the light of the burning rick,
An angry people huddled thick;
She hears them shout: "Now, to your fate!
Spare neither the young one, nor the old;
Both work us ruin manifold.
Off with thee, child of wrath! or we will roast thee, straight!"
Then cried the girl on her knees to the cruel populace,
"You will slay my granny with your very words!" and prayed for grace.
But when, in their infuriate blindness, heed they take
Of the poor pleader in her unbound hair,
They only think they see her, then and there,
Torn by the rage demoniac,
And all the fiercer cry, "Avaunt!"
While the more savage forward spring,
And their feet on the threshold plant,
Fragments of blazing cord in their arms brandishing.

"Hold! I command you, hold!" cried one, before unheard;
And a man leaped into the crowd like lightning with the word, —
One whom we know, — and over all
His voice uplifted thus Pascal:
"What! will ye murder women, then?
Children of God, and you, the same;
Or are ye tigers, and not men?
And after all they have suffered! Shame!

Fall back, fall back, I say! The walls are growing hot!"
"Then let them quit for aye our shore!
They are Huguenots — knowest thou not? — long since by the demon bought;
God smites because we drave them not before."
"Quick, bring the other forth, or living she will burn!
Ye dogs, who moved you to this crime?
It was the wroth Marcel! See where he comes in time!"
"Thou liest!" the soldier thundered in his turn;
"I love her, boaster, more than thou!"
"How wilt thou prove thy love, thou of the tender heart?"
"I am come to save her life! I am come to take her part!
I am come, if so she will, to marry her, even now!"

"And so am I," replied Pascal; and steadfastly,
Before his rival's eyes, bound as by some great spell,
Unto the orphan girl turned he
With worship all unspeakable.
"Answer us, Franconette, and speak the truth alone!
Thou art followed from place to place, by spite and scorn, my own;
But we two love thee well, and ready are to brave
Death, ay, or hell, thy life to save.
Choose which of us thou wilt!" "Nay," she lamented sore,
"Dearest, mine is a love that slays.
Be happy then without me! Forget me; go thy ways!"
"Happy without thee, dear? That can I never more!
Nay, were it true, as lying rumor says,

An evil spirit ruled thee o'er,
I would rather die with thee than live bereavèd days!"
When life is at its bitterest
The voice of love aye rules us best.
Instantly rose the girl above her mortal dread,
And, on the crowd advancing straight,
"Because I love Pascal, alone I would meet my fate.
Howbeit, his will is law," she said,
"Wherefore together let our souls be sped."
Then was Pascal in heaven, Marcel in the dust laid low,
Whom amid all the quaking throng his rival sought,
Crying, "I am more blessed than thou. Forgive! Thou art brave, I know;
Some squire should follow me to death, and wilt thou not?
Serve me! I have no other friend." Marcel seemed dreaming,
And now he scowled with wrath, and now his eye grew kind;
Terrible was the battle in his mind
Till his eye fell on Franconette, serene and beaming,
But with no word for *him*. Then pale but smilingly,
"Because it is her will," he said, "I follow thee."

Two weeks had passed away, and a strange nuptial train
Adown the verdant hill wound slowly to the plain.
First came the comely pair we know in all their bloom,
While, gathered from far and wide, three deep on either side,
The ever curious rustics hied,
Shuddering at heart o'er Pascal's doom.

Marcel conducts their march, but pleasure's kindly hue
Glows not on the unmoving face he lifts to view,
And something glances from his eye
Which makes men shudder as they pass him by.
Yet verily his mien triumphant is; at least
Sole master is he of this feast,
And gives his rival, *for bouquet*,
A supper and a ball to-day.
But, at the dance and at the board
Alike, scarce one essayed a word;
None sang a song, none raised a jest,
For dark forebodings that oppressed.

And the betrothed, by love's deep rapture fascinated,
Silent on the sheer edge of fate the end awaited.
No sound their dream dispelled, but hand in hand did press,
And eyes looked ever on a visioned happiness.
And so, at last, the evening fell.
Then one affrighted woman suddenly brake the spell.
She came. She fell on Pascal's neck. "Fly, son!" she cried;
"I am come from the sorceress even now! Fly thy false bride!
For the fatal sieve[1] hath turned; thy death decree is spoken!

[1] *Lou sedas.* The *sedas* is a sieve of raw silk used for sifting flour. It has also a singular use in necromancy. When one desires to know the name of the author of an act,—a theft, for instance,—the sieve is made to revolve, but woe to him whose name is spoken just as the sieve stops.

There 's a sulphur fume in the bridal room, by the same
dread token.
Enter it not! If thou livest, thou art lost," she said,
" And what were life to me if thou wert dead? "
Then Pascal felt his eyelids wet,
And turned away, striving to hide his face; whereon,
" Ingrate! " the mother shrieked, " but I will save thee
yet;
Thou wilt not dare " — and fell at the feet of her son —
" Thou shalt pass over my body, sure as thou goest forth!
A wife, it seems, is all, and a mother nothing worth;
Unhappy that I am! " All wept aloud for woe.

" Marcel ! " the bridegroom said, " her grief is my de-
spair;
But love, thou knowest, is stronger yet. 'T is time to go!
Only, if I should die, my mother be thy care."

" I can no more! Thy mother hath conquered here,"
The sturdy soldier said, and he too brushed a tear.
" Prythee take courage, friend of mine!
Thy Françonette is good and pure;
Yon tale was told of dark design.
But give thy mother thanks: but for her coming, sure
This night had seen my death and thine."
" What sayest thou? " " Hush! I will tell thee all.
Thou knowest I loved this maid, Pascal;
For her, like thee, I would have shed my blood.
And I dreamed I was loved again, — she held me so in
thrall, —
Albeit my prayer was aye withstood.

She knew her elders promised her to me,
And so, when other suitors barred my way, in spite,
Saying, 'In love as in war one may use strategy,'
I gave the wizard gold, my rivals to affright.
Thereafter chance did all; insomuch that I said,
My treasure is already won;
But when, in the same breath, we two our suit made known,
And when I saw her, without turn of head
Toward my despair, choose thee, it was not to be borne!
I vowed her death, and thine, and mine, ere morrow morn!
I had thought to lead you forth to the bridal bower ere-long,
And there, the bed beside, which I had mined with care,
To say, 'No prince of the power of the air
Is here! I burn you for my wrong.
Ay, cross yourselves,' quoth I, 'for you shall surely die!'
And the folk had seen us three together fly!

"But thy mother, with her tears, hath put my vengeance out.
I thought of my own, Pascal, who died so long ago.
Care thou for thine! Thou hast nought to fear from me, I trow;
Eden is coming down to earth for thee, no doubt,
But I, whom men henceforth can only hate and flout,
Will to the wars away! for something in me saith,
I may recover from my rout
Better than by a crime, — ay, by a soldier's death!"
Saying, he vanished; and loud cheers broke forth on every side,

The while, with deepening blushes, the twain each other eyed,
As they were suddenly timid grown.

For now the morning stars in the dark heaven shone —
I lift my pencil here, my breath comes hurriedly;
Colors for strife and pain have I,
But for their perfect rapture — none.[1]

And so the morning came with softly dawning light;
No sound, no stir, as yet, inside the cottage white,
Albeit, at Estanquet, three hamlets gathered were
To wait the waking of the wedded pair.
Marcel had told the whole unhappy truth. Nathless,
The devil was mighty in those days;
Some fear for the bridegroom yet, and guess
At strange mischance. "In the night wild cries were heard," one says;
One hath seen shadows dance on the wall in wondrous ways.
Lives Pascal yet? None dares to dress
The spicy broth[2] to leave beside the nuptial door;
And so another hour goes o'er.
Then floats a lovely strain of music overhead,

[1] The reader will be reminded of William Morris, at the close of his exquisite story of Psyche: —

> "My lyre is but attuned to tears and pain;
> How can I sing the never-ending day?"

[2] *Lou tourrin*, a highly-spiced onion soup, which is carried by the wedding guests to the bridegroom at a late hour of the night.

A sweet refrain oft heard before,
'T is the *aubado*[1] offered to the newly wed.

So the door opes at last, and the young pair are seen;
And she, though flushing for the folk, with friendly hand and mien,
The fragments of her garter gives,
And every woman two receives.
Then winks and words of ruth from eye and lip are passed,
And the luck of our Pascal makes envious all at last;
For the poor lads whose hearts, I ween, are healed but slightly
Of their first passionate pain,
When they see Françonette, blossoming rose-like, brightly,
All dewy fresh, all sweet and sightly,
Cry, "*We will ne'er believe in sorcerers again!*"

The action of the poem is so rapid that, in order to give a complete outline of the plot, and some notion of the fine discrimination of character which it contains, I have been obliged to omit some descriptive passages of extreme beauty. M. de Lavergne says truly of "Françonette," that it is, of all Jasmin's works, the one in which he has aimed at being most entirely popular, and that it is, at the same time, the most noble and the most chastened. He might have added, the most chivalrous also.

[1] A song of early morning, corresponding to the serenade or evening song.

There is something essentially knightly in Pascal's cast of character, and it is singular that, at the supreme crisis of his fate, he assumes, as if unconsciously, the very phraseology of chivalry: "Some squire (*donzel*) should follow me to death," etc.; and we find it altogether natural and becoming in the high-hearted smith. There are many places where Jasmin addresses his readers directly as "*Messieurs;*" where the context also makes it evident that the word is emphatic; that he is distinctly conscious of addressing those who are above him in rank, and that the proper translation is "gentles," or even "masters:" yet no poet ever lived who was less of a sycophant. The rather rude woodcut likeness prefixed to the popular edition of the Gascon's works represents a face so widely unlike all well-known modern types, that one feels sure it must be like the original. Once seen in living reality, it must have haunted the memory for ever. It is broad and massive in feature, shrewd and yet sweet in expression, homely, and serenely unconscious. It is "*vilain et très vilain*" in every line, but the head is carried high, with something more than a courtier's dignity.

THE SONGS OF THE TROUBADOURS.

I.

IT is not easy to say how much of the interest of the new Provençal literature is due to the ancient dignity of its name, and to a kind of reflected lustre which it receives from the far-away glories of the old. Yet when we come to look carefully for the connection and resemblance between the two, we shall be surprised to find how slight these are. Nearly all the modern literatures of Europe owe as much to the early Provençal poetry, as does the literature of the Troubadours' own land. Nay, it has seemed, until very lately, as if France had been the smallest heir to the rich legacy of modern song, if not completely disinherited. The truth is, that the literature of the troubadours, childish in spirit, but precociously mature and beautiful in form, perished early by violence and without issue. Aliens had already caught the spirit of it, and imitated its music with more or less suc-

cess; but six hundred years were to elapse before a school of poetry would arise in which we might reasonably look for a true family likeness to this the first untutored outburst of modern minstrelsy. The likeness may be traced, no doubt, but it is faint and fleeting. The early Provençal literature stands before us as something unique, integral, immortally youthful, and therefore unconscious of its own range and limitations, pathetic from the brevity of its course, a development of art without an exact parallel in the world's history.

There has never been a more brilliant analysis of what may be called the *technique* of the troubadour poetry than Sismondi's in his "Literature of the South of Europe." He does no less than furnish a key to the whole mystery of modern versification, and whoever would study that versification as an art ought to bestow the most careful attention on Sismondi's first four chapters. But even Sismondi has his prepossessions; and in particular we are inclined to think that he lays too much stress on the influence of the Arabs, at least over the *forms* of modern verse. There is no doubt that the frequent incursions

of the Saracens into the south of France, during the three centuries preceding A.D. 1000, influenced powerfully the imagination of the inhabitants of Provence, and furnished them with subjects for an abundant ballad literature of a crude order, slight but sufficient traces of which remain. But the mutual aversion of Christian and infidel was then at its height; the Moçarabins, or mixed Arabians, — Christian Goths, who under special circumstances accepted the amnesty of their Mussulman conquerors and lived peaceably under their sway, and on whose influence in diffusing Oriental culture Sismondi lays great stress, — were shunned as the vilest of apostates; and although these were the days of Haroun Al Raschid and his son, Al Mamoun, under whom every branch of Moorish art flourished amazingly, there seems no good reason to suppose that the Christians borrowed more from the Saracens in the department of poetry than they did in that of constructive architecture or general decoration. There are words of Arabian origin in the Romance language, and there are many more of Greek origin, preserved from that long period

of Greek occupation and civilization which antedated even the Roman conquest. But the language as a whole remains Latin, modified by the speech of the northern barbarians, and the first of a family of such languages to produce a literature.

And as with the form of this literature, so with its substance and inspiration. We have elsewhere traced what seems to us the unbroken descent — through the Latin hymnology of the earlier Middle Age — of the troubadour *measures* in which, as in all modern verse, the effect depends upon accent, from the classic measures in which the effect depends upon quantity. It is possible, although by no means, certain, that the first idea of those terminal rhymes which were destined to play so important a part in the new poetry may have been derived from Oriental compositions, of which they were a conspicuous ornament. But at all events, it was in the cell of the Christian monk that the seeds of poetic as of all other culture were kept and fostered as carefully as the flowers of the convent-garden, through the troubled season of the first Christian millennium. During that most dreary time

of transition, Christianity was slowly spreading among the half-savage races which had replaced the Romans and their colonists in the south of Europe, and adopting and assimilating to itself certain of the native barbarian ideas. Prominent among these was that serious, almost superstitious respect for woman which seems a birthright of the northern nations. It was a notion wholly at variance with the view of classic paganism, but one which the spirit of Christianity favored. The grand primitive passion — the love of man for woman — received a sort of theoretic consecration, and the virgin mother of Jesus Christ became one of the chief objects of public worship. And then in the period of reaction and exhilaration which followed the close of the tenth century, and the relief from that harrowing presentiment of the end of the world and the last judgment which had prevailed almost everywhere as the first millennial year approached, at the time also of the final repulse of the Saracens in the southwest, — then, if ever, chivalry, or the adventurous service of God and womankind, took systematic shape, and the Crusades were its first outgrowth

in action, and the love-poetry of the troubadours, or minstrels of the south, its first symmetrical expression in art.

Many volumes have been written on the position and profession of the troubadour; charming volumes, too, which are accessible to almost every reader. Yet when all is gathered which can be certainly known, how strange a phenomenon he remains to our modern eyes! How much is still left to the imagination! We know that he was usually attached to the household of a great seignior or the court of a reigning sovereign, and was a frequent, though, as it would seem, voluntary attendant on their distant expeditions. We know that it was his *métier*, or at any rate a principal part of it, to select some lady as the object, for the time being, of his formal worship, and to celebrate her charms and virtues in those melodious numbers, the secret of whose infinitely variable beauty he himself never ceased to regard as a kind of miraculous discovery or revelation. We know that while the singer was sometimes even of kingly rank, oftener a poor cavalier who had need to live upon his skill in *finding*, and oftener

yet a man of humble birth whom genius was readily allowed to ennoble, the lady-love was almost always of exalted station; frequently, by the operation of the Salic law, a great heiress in her own right; and that hence her hand was certain to have been disposed of for prudential or political reasons before she had any choice in the matter. There were reasons, therefore, besides total depravity, why she was regularly a married woman.[1] We know that, theoret-

[1] "The prolonged barbarity of the feudal marriage relation gave rise to the most singular moral and social phenomena. Of those first germs of civilization which we have seen fermenting and developing themselves in the eleventh century, that new sentiment, that respectful enthusiasm which even then tended to become the principle of disinterested actions, was the most deep-rooted and the most energetic. This new sentiment however could not manifest itself truly and become a moral force, a principle of heroism, in conjugal relations. . . . It was rather in contradistinction with those relations, and as if with a view to compensate for their defects, that the love of chivalry developed itself; and if any thing can aid us in forming a correct conception of the exaggerated pretensions, the refinements, and the subtleties of this love, it is the precarious and interested motives of the feudal marriage-tie. The sufferings to which women were exposed as wives explain to a certain extent the adoration which they exacted and obtained as the ladies of the chevaliers." Fauriel's "History of Provençal Poetry," p. 321 of Adler's English translation. I cite the translation because I have not the original at hand, but it is in most respects a very bad one.

ically, chivalric love was a something mystical and supersensual; but that the courts of love sanctioned much which the courts of law, even of those days, forbade. We know that a seignior and a husband could regard with complacency, not to say pride, the ceremonial devotion of his vassal to his wife; yet that he was liable to be visited, when all things appeared most picturesque and prosperous, by movements of what we cannot help regarding as a natural jealousy, and impulses to deadly revenge. We know that in the great majority of cases there came a "sombre close" to the troubadour's "voluptuous day," and that his life of amatory adventure and artificially stimulated emotion was apt to end in the shadow of the cloister. We seem, in fine, to see him as an airy, graceful *insouciant* figure, who sports and sings along a dainty path, skirting the sheer and lofty verge of the great gulf of human passion; and the student will probably decide, from his own knowledge of human nature, in what proportion of cases he kept his perilous footing upon the flowery heights, and in what he plunged headlong into the raging deeps below.

So much for the man; and now a word or two more about his work. Let it be understood that we are to speak of the *chansons*, or love-songs, chiefly. There is another great body of troubadour literature, coming under the general head of *sirventes* and comprising narrative and satirical poems, which, though full and overfull of suggestions about the manners of the time, have, as a rule, no great literary merit. The chief wonder of the *chansons* is, and must ever be, the contrast between the consummate beauty and immense variety of their forms, and the simplicity, the sameness, and the frequent triviality of their sentiments. In this respect troubadour poetry is like Greek sculpture. The technical excellence of it is so incredible that we cannot help regarding it as something spontaneous, half-unconscious, — *found*, as the troubadours themselves so strikingly said, rather than learned, — which no care and patience of deliberate effort could ever quite have attained. Sismondi complains of the monotony of the troubadour compositions; that they begin by amazing and end by disappointing the student. But they can disappoint, it seems to us, only

him who is predetermined to seek for more than is in them. It is little to say that they show no depth of thought. They contain hardly any thought at all. The love of external nature is represented in them alone by the poet's perennial rapture at the return of spring; spring, which terminated his winter confinement and set him free to wander over the sunny land; spring, with its mysterious but everlastingly intimate association with thoughts of love. Of sensuous imagery of any kind these poems contain very little, which is another reason for distrusting the theory of Arabian origin and influence. They are "all compact" of primary emotion, of sentiment pure and simple; and, as such, they rank in the scale of expression between music and ordinary poetry, partaking almost as much of the nature of the former as of the latter; which again is one reason why, although the rules of their language are simple, these lyrics are often so very obscure, — so elusive, rather, and intangible in their meaning. Their words are like musical notes, not so much signs of thought as symbols of feeling, which almost defy an arbitrary interpretation, and must be

rendered in part by the temperament of the performer.

And herein will be found our excuse, or rather our reason, for having, in the versions which we have attempted, preserved at all hazards the measure and movement of the originals, the lines of widely varying length, the long-sustained and strangely distributed rhymes. The reader who cares to examine these originals — to which he is referred — will find the rendering not always close, according to the present high standard of accuracy; but where form is so wonderfully paramount to sense, a likeness in form seems of the first importance, and the rest has to come somewhat as Heaven pleases. Strictly speaking, however, some of these versions, at least, should rather be called paraphrases.

The selections which follow have been made, with one or two exceptions, from Raynouard's "Choix des Poésies originales des Troubadours," first published in 1816, or three years later than Sismondi's analysis of the structure of the troubadour verse. In a note to one of his later editions, Sismondi expresses himself as disap-

pointed in many ways in the collection of Raynouard; chiefly because, like other bodies of elegant extracts, it shows little of the coarser side of the Provençal poetry, and thus fails to illustrate its range. Out of the two or three hundred poets whom Raynouard specifies, we, however, shall have mentioned in this series of articles barely a score, and may certainly be pardoned for having selected those of their strains which we found most delicate and sweet, and which seemed to us to exhibit, with the least defacement from the license of the time, the sublimated ideal of that lisping, short-lived school of song.[1] We have also preferred those authors whose names are most associated with contemporary history, and if we dared hope that our imperfect versions might evoke

[1] And it need hardly be said, that, so far as we have treated this poetry at all, we have treated it seriously. Like all modes of exclusively sentimental expression, it is easily open to ridicule; but the entire literature can hardly have partaken in its day of the nature of a joke. Those, however, who desire to see it travestied with considerable ability, and the stories of its chief masters flippantly and amusingly told from a thoroughly modern and rather vulgar point of view, are recommended to a little book entitled, "The Troubadours: their Loves and Lyrics," by John Rutherford, published in London by Smith and Elder, 1873.

around the reader any thing resembling the Corôt-like atmosphere haunted by simple bird-notes, with which we felt ourselves invested during the dark winter-days while we were transcribing them, we should be more than content.

It is matter for rejoicing, that the first of the troubadours whose works are well authenticated was a sovereign who figured somewhat conspicuously in the history of his time, so that his most important piece can be exactly dated, and the rest approximately. The ease and finish of William of Poitiers's versification, and the fact that his was a life of constant war and crowded adventure, in which poetry can have been only a pastime, forbid us to suppose that he was really the father of Provençal song. But although, as the editor of Sainte Palaye dryly observes in the notice of William in his "Histoire littéraire des Troubadours," it is the quality of the poetry that concerns us, not that of the poet, — it is doubtless to the quality of the poet that we owe the preservation of the poetry.

William IX., Count of Poitiers and Duke of Aquitaine, was born in 1071, and succeeded in

his fifteenth year to the sovereignty of a region comprising, besides Gascony and the northern half of Aquitaine, Limousin, Berry, and Auvergne. He grew up bold in war, unscrupulous in wit, and unbridled in love, a man of many crimes, but famed for the courtesy of his manners, and capable of generous and even pious *retours*, as the French call them. He is, in fact, one of the first distinctly knight-like figures we have, — a character of which the strong tints and picturesque outlines yet stand out clearly from the faded canvas of history. Of the many anecdotes preserved concerning him we give, on the authority of William of Malmesbury, one which piquantly illustrates his usual attitude toward the clergy and the church. In William's forty-third year, the Bishop of Poitiers excommunicated him on account of one of the many scandals with which his name was associated. When the bishop began his formula, William fiercely drew his sword and threatened to kill him if he went on. The prelate made a feint of pausing, and then hurriedly pronounced the rest of the sentence. "And now you may strike," said he, "for I have done." "No," re-

plied William, coolly putting up his sword, "I don't like you well enough to send you to Paradise!" Many of William's amatory poems are unfit for translation, and there is too much reason to suppose that they describe adventures of his own; but some are wholly noble and refined, and seem to show that the fine ideal of chivalric love was already formed, even in so stormy a breast as William's. We give a specimen of one of these last. It is in the favorite spring key: —

Behold, the meads are green again,[1]
The orchard-bloom is seen again,
Of sky and stream the mien again
Is mild, is bright;
Now should each heart that loves obtain
Its own delight.

But I will say no ill of love,
However slight my guerdon prove:
Repining doth not me behoove;
And yet — to know
How lightly she, I fain would move,
Might bliss bestow!

[1] "*Pus vezem de novelh florir*," etc. (Raynouard, vol. v., p. 117.)

There are who hold my folly great,
Because with little hope I wait;
But one old saw doth animate
And me assure:
Their hearts are high, their might is great,
Who well endure.

Almost alone of the great nobles of Southern Europe, William resisted the call of Raymond of Toulouse to the first Crusade in 1095; but when, in 1099, the great news arrived of the capture of Jerusalem, and an appeal was made for the reënforcement of the small garrison left in the Holy Land, William was overcome and prepared to go; and the second of his pieces which we have attempted to render was composed early in the year 1101, on the eve of his departure: —

Desire of song hath taken me,[1]
Yet sorrowful must my song be.
No more pay I my fealty
In Limousin or Poitiers.

Since I go forth to exile far,
And leave my son to stormy war,
To fear and peril, for they are
No friends who dwell about him there.

[1] "*Pus de chantar m'es pres talens*," etc. (Raynouard, vol. iv., p. 83.)

What wonder, then, my heart is sore
That Poitiers I see no more,
And Fulk of Anjou must implore
To guard his kinsman and my heir?

If he of Anjou shield him not,
And he who made me knight,[1] I wot
Many against the boy will plot,
Deeming him well-nigh in despair.

Nay, if he be not wondrous wise,
And gay and ready for enterprise,
Gascons and Angevins will rise
And him into the dust will bear.

Ah, I was brave, and I had fame,
But we are sundered all the same.
I go to him in whose great name
Confide all sinners everywhere.

Surrendering all that did elate
My heart, all pride of steed or state,
To him on whom the pilgrims wait,
Without more tarrying, I repair.

Forgive me comrade, most my own,
If aught of wrong I thee have done!
I lift to Jesus, on his throne,
In Latin and Romance, my prayer.

[1] Philip I. of France, William's suzerain.

Oh, I was gallant, I was glad,
Till my Lord spake, and me forbade:
But now the end is coming sad,
Nor can I more my burden bear.

Good friends, when that indeed I die,
Pay me due honor where I lie;
Tell how in love and luxury
I triumphed still, or here or there.
But farewell now, love, luxury,
And silken robes, and minnevair![1]

The suggestions of this *naïve* lament are almost infinite. In the first place, it is impossible to doubt that it came straight from the heart of the writer, and expresses, without the faintest disguise, his conflicting emotions. As the outburst of a reckless, vehement, voluptuous nature, under a sort of moral arrest or conviction, it is touchingly frank. A second summons to the Holy Land had come, one which it would be palpable dishonor to disregard. If the going thither might serve by way of expiation of former sins of sense and violence, the ducal poet felt bound to go, since he had more upon his

[1] The movement of these two specimens is almost the same, but William was master of a variety of measures, and sometimes managed trochaic verse with great skill, as in the song beginning "*Farai cansoneta nova.*"

conscience in that way than he could comfortably sustain. But he makes not the faintest pretence to enthusiasm, religious or other. It is grievous to him to leave his own realms, the scene of all his pleasures and triumphs. He really loved his child, and would have enjoyed superintending his education in knightly exercises; and to abandon him to the attacks and encroachments of jealous neighbors was intolerable. It is evident also that he put no very implicit faith in the disinterestedness either of his seignior or of Fulk of Anjou. Never did his home-life look more alluring; and the notion of turning his back upon it at the Lord's behest was altogether melancholy. He feels that he cannot long survive such a sacrifice, yet that he has hardly a choice about making it. The allusion, in the eighth stanza, apparently to his comrade in arms, is positively tender; and the impulse which leads him to request, in the closing lines, that he may be honored after his death for those things in which he did really delight and excel, is almost droll in its honesty. We have lingered the longer over these personal revelations because they are, after all, the soul of literary history,

and we shall find only too little of the sort in most of the remaining songs which we shall cite. It remains to add, that William's presentiment of martyrdom was not realized. He escaped the manifold disasters of the campaign of 1101, and returned within two years to his native land. With characteristic levity, he afterwards applied himself, in the brief intervals of his struggles with Alphonse Jourdain for the possession of Toulouse, to the composition of a long narrative poem, in which he seems to have detailed, in a rather humorous fashion, the events of that tragic Syrian campaign; but the poem, though frequently mentioned, has not been preserved. He died in 1127, at the age of fifty-six.

Very little is known concerning the life and character of Marcabrun, the author of our next specimen. The question has even been raised, whether the Crusade mentioned in this little *sirvente* were the Crusade of 1147, or that of St. Louis, preached in 1269. The former is more probable. The Louis named in the fourth stanza was, presumably, Louis VII., the first husband of Queen Eleanor of England, who

accompanied him on this Crusade; and Marcabrun must therefore have been contemporary, for a few years at least, with William of Poitiers. In the twenty or more pieces ascribed to him, there are but few allusions to love, and Marcabrun alone, of all the troubadours, is not known ever to have been himself a subject of the tender passion. The contrast is curious between the highly artificial structure of the following verses, — one rhyme five times repeated, and the others separated by the length of an entire stanza, — and the extreme simplicity and obviousness of the sentiments: —

A fount there is, doth overfling[1]
Green turf and garden walks; in spring,
A glory of white blossoming
  Shines underneath its guardian tree,
And new-come birds old music sing;
And there, alone and sorrowing,
  I found a maid I could not cheer,

Of beauty meet to be adored,
The daughter of the castle's lord;
Methought the melody outpoured
  By all the birds unceasingly,

[1] "*A la fontana del vergier,*" etc. (Raynouard, vol. iii., p. 375.)

The season sweet, the verdant sward,
Might gladden her, and eke my word
Her grief dismiss, would she but hear.

Her tears into the fountain fell;
With sorry sighs her heart did swell.
"O Jesus, king invisible,"
She cried, "of thee is my distress!
Through thy deep wrong bereft I dwell.
Earth's best have bidden us farewell,
On thee at thine own shrine to wait.

"And my true love is also gone,
The free, fair, gentle, valiant one;
So what can I, but make my moan?
And how the sad desire suppress
That Louis' name were here unknown:
The prayers, the mandates all undone,
Whereby I am made desolate?"

Soon as I heard this plaintive cry,
Moving the limpid wave anigh,
"Weep not, fair maid, so piteously,
Nor waste thy roses!" thus I cried;
"Neither despair, for he is by
Who wrought this leafy greenery,
And he will give thee joy one day."

"Seigneur, I well believe," she said,
"Of God I shall be comforted
In yonder world, when I am dead,
And many a sinful soul beside:
But now hath he prohibited

My chief delight. I bow my head,
But heaven is very far away!"

Even more studied in structure, but also more musical than the above, are the few love-poems of Peter of Auvergne, who was born near the time of William of Poitiers's death, and whose career of nearly a century, lasting at least until 1214, won for him the surname of "the Ancient." In the old manuscript "Lives of the Troubadours,"[1] Peter of Auvergne is described as having risen by his genius, from a humble station, to be the favored companion of princes. "He made," observes the monkish historian, "better-sounding verses than had ever been made before his time, especially one famous verse about the short days and long nights. He made no song [*chanson*], for at that time no poems were called songs, but verses, and Sir

[1] Of these there are two collections, made by the monks, and still preserved in the original manuscripts. One of these was made in the twelfth century, by Carmentière, a monk of the Isles of Thiers, under the direction of Alphonso II., King of Aragon and Count of Provence. The other was made, near the close of the fourteenth century, by a Genoese, called "The Monk of the Isles of Gold," who completed and corrected the work of Carmentière. In 1576, Jean Nostradamus compiled, from these and other sources, his rather apocryphal "Lives of the Provençal Poets;" and Crescimbeni, in his "Stória della Volgar Poesie," has made a good selection from Nostradamus.

Giraud de Borneil made the first *chanson* that ever was made. But he was graced and honored by all worthy men and women, and was held to be the best troubadour in the world, before the days of Giraud de Borneil. He praised himself and his own songs a great deal, and blamed the other troubadours:" both of which assertions his remains abundantly confirm; "and," adds the biographer, who occasionally makes a parade of citing an authority, "the Dauphin of Auvergne, who was born in his day, has told me that he lived long and honorably in the world, and finally went into his order, and died." A few verses out of the longest and most elaborate of Peter's love-lyrics will suffice as a specimen of his manner: —

"Now unto my lady's dwelling[1]
Hie thee, nightingale, away,
Tidings of her lover telling,
Waiting what herself will say;
Make thee 'ware
How she doth fare;
Then, her shelter spurning,
Do not be,
On any plea,
Let from thy returning.

[1] "*Rossinhol en son Repaire,*" etc. ("Parnasse Occitanien," page 138.)

"Come, thine utmost speed compelling,
Show her mien, her state, I pray!
All for her is my heart swelling;
Comrades, kindred, what are they?
Joyous bear
Through the air,
Wheresoever turning,
Zealously,
Fearlessly,
All thy lesson learning!"

When the bird of grace excelling
Lighted on her beauty's ray,
Song from out his throat came welling,
As though night had turned to day.
Then and there
He did forbear,
Until well discerning
Hear would she,
Seriously,
All his tale of yearning.

And so on through the three stanzas of the poet's formal message to his lady, as delivered by the bird. The text is very obscure in parts, and is given with unusual variations by different compilers, and the reiterated rhyme grows well-nigh impossible to imitate, ever so remotely. In the seventh stanza, where the lady's answer begins, a second set of rhymes is adopted, and this is preserved through the latter half of the poem.

All that is known of Guirand le Roux, the author of our next specimen, is very interesting, and intimately associates the poet's name with some of the famous persons and events of his time. The manuscript "Lives of the Troubadours" contain only this brief notice of him: "Girandos le Rox was of Toulouse, the son of a poor cavalier who came to serve at the court of his seignior, the Count Alphonse. He was courteous, and a fine singer, and became enamoured of the countess, the daughter of his seignior; and the love which he bore her taught him how to find [*trobar*], and he made many verses." Now the Count Alphonse, here mentioned, was Alphonse Jourdain, second son of Raymond de Saint Gilles, the ardent and self-devoted captain of the first Crusade. Alphonse himself was born in the Holy Land, and baptized by his father in the Jordan; whence his surname. Raymond, as is well known, took a vow to die where Christ had died, and performed it; and his elder son, Bertrand, followed his example, resigning the county of Toulouse to his brother Alphonse, then a lad of thirteen or fourteen, when he left for Syria in 1109. For ten years, our old friend William of Poitiers disputed, with varying for-

tune, the right of Alphonse of Toulouse. After this, the latter, having established his claim, reigned in peace, until he himself fulfilled the family destiny by joining the second Crusade; and the poems of Guirand le Roux all belong to the period between 1120 and 1147, the date of that Crusade; probably, also, to the last ten years of that period. As for Guirand's lady-love, the only daughter of Alphonse mentioned in trustworthy history is a natural one, who accompanied her father to the Holy Land, and there became the wife, or a wife, of Sultan Noureddin, and the heroine of some wonderfully romantic adventures. And though Sainte Palaye, or his editor, insists that a natural daughter never had the title of countess, and even persuades himself of a certain Faidide married to Humbert III. of Sicily, there is little reason for doubting the identity of Guirand's mistress with the brilliant heroine of Eastern story. At all events, he, almost alone of the troubadours, loved one woman only, and sang of love exclusively, in strains of unfailing dignity and refinement. Here is one of which the high-flown devotion, whimsical but not un-

manly, reminds us a little of the latest and noblest lyrics of chivalry, — the melodies of Lovelace, Wotton, and Montrose. Observe, as in our last specimen, the rhymes corresponding in successive stanzas: —

Come, lady, to my song incline,[1]
The last that shall assail thine ear.
None other cares my strains to hear,
And scarce thou feign'st thyself therewith delighted;
Nor know I well if I am loved or slighted;
But this I know, thou radiant one and sweet,
That, loved or spurned, I die before thy feet!

Yea, I will yield this life of mine
In very deed, if cause appear,
Without another boon to cheer.
Honor it is to be by thee incited
To any deed; and I, when most benighted
By doubt, remind me that times change and fleet,
And brave men still do their occasion meet.

Thus far we have quoted minor poets only; but our next name is one of the most illustrious in Provençal literature. The long and conspicuous life of Bernard of Ventadorn — or Ventadour — teems with historic associations; and the works which he has left would fill a volume by themselves. We must confine our-

[1] "*Auiatz la derreira chanso.*" (Raynouard, vol. iii., p. 12.)

selves to the briefest outline of his life, resisting the temptation of its fascinating details, and to a few passages, taken almost at random, from poems which are fairly embarrassing from the abundance of their beauty.

In Bernard we have once more, as so often among the troubadours, the association of lowly birth with lovely gifts. He was a son of the baker at the castle of Ventadorn, the seat of the viscounts of that name, long famous among the petty sovereigns of Southern France for their enthusiastic patronage of the poetic art. Bernard's own seignior was Ebles III., of whom the Prior of Vigeois records, in his chronicle, that he "loved, even to old age, the songs of *alacrity*"—"*usque ad senectam carmina alacritatis dilexit.*"—But Bernard was forty years old when Ebles died, consequently the latter was yet in his early prime when Bernard was born at Ventadorn, not far from the year 1130, and he speedily discovered, and carefully cultivated, the boy's talent. The not unnatural result was, that the young troubadour selected, as the object of his melodious homage, the youthful second wife of Ebles, Adelaide of

Montpellier. And here let the monkish biographer take up the tale: "She [Adelaide] was a very lively and gentle lady, and was highly delighted with Bernard's songs, so that she became enamoured of him and he of her. . . . And their love had lasted a good while before her husband perceived it; but when he did he was angry, and had the lady very closely watched and guarded: wherefore she dismissed Bernard, and he went quite out of the country. He betook himself to the Duchess of Normandy, who was illustrious and much admired, and well versed in matters of fame and honor, and knew how to award praise. And the songs of Bernard pleased her mightily, wherefore she gave him a most cordial welcome, and he resided at her court a long time, and was in love with her, and she with him; and he made many fine songs about it. But while he was staying with her, the King of England, her husband, removed her from Normandy, and Bernard remained here, sad and sorrowful." Now this second royal lady-love of our aspiring poet was none other than the celebrated Eleanor, president of one of the most illustrious of the courts of love,

the granddaughter of William of Poitiers, the divorced wife of Henry VII. of France, the wife of Henry II. of England, the merciless, but by no means immaculate, censor of the fair Rosamond Clifford, and the mother of Richard Cœur de Lion. When Bernard entered her service, in 1152, Eleanor was thirty-three years old, and fully ten years the senior both of the troubadour and of her husband, Henry II. But her beauty was perennial; she had other charms which did not depend upon the freshness of youth, and her personal prestige was destined to last unweakened for many a long year, and to survive extraordinary vicissitudes of lot. If Bernard were ever profoundly in earnest, he would seem to have been so in some of the lines which he addressed to Eleanor; but he was a very troubadour of the troubadours in his constant mingling of levity and tenderness, of graceful *insouciance* with keen and sudden pathos. Our first extract belongs to Adelaide's time; and, though sufficiently far from simple, these verses have in them something of the fresh enthusiasm, half-confident and half-jealous, of a first experience: —

No marvel is it if I sing[1]
  Better than other minstrels all;
  For more than they am I love's thrall,
And all myself therein I fling, —
Knowledge and sense, body and soul,
  And whatso power I have beside;
  The rein that doth my being guide
Impels me to this only goal.

His heart is dead whence doth not spring
  Love's odor, sweet and magical;
  His life doth ever on him pall
Who knoweth not that blessed thing;
Yea, God, who doth my life control,
  Were cruel did he bid me bide
  A month, or even a day, denied
The love whose rapture I extol.

How keen, how exquisite the sting,
  Of that sweet odor! At its call
  An hundred times a day I fall
And faint, an hundred rise and sing!
So fair the semblance of my dole,
  'T is lovelier than another's pride;
  If such the ill doth me betide,
Good hap were more than I could thole!

Yet haste, kind Heaven, the sundering
  True swains from false, great hearts from small!
  The traitor in the dust bid crawl,
The faithless to confession bring!

[1] "*Non est merevelha s'ieu chan,*" etc. (Raynouard, vol. iii., p. 44.)

Ah, if I were the master sole
  Of all earth's treasures multiplied,
  To see my lady satisfied
Of my pure faith, I 'd give the whole!

And here are some fugitive strains out of that ever-recurring spring melody which no singer tried oftener or executed more sweetly than Bernard of Ventadorn:—

When tender leafage doth appear,[1]
  When vernal meads grow gay with flowers,
And aye with singing loud and clear
  The nightingale fulfils the hours,
I joy in him and joy in every flower
And in myself, and in my lady more.
For when joys do inclose me and invest,
My joy in her transcendeth all the rest.

The following exhales the true spring sadness: —

Well may I hail that lovely time[2]
  When opening buds proclaim the spring,
And, in the *thickening boughs*, their chime
  The birds do late and early ring.

[1] "*Quand erba vertz e fuelha par,*" etc. (Raynouard, vol. iii., p. 53.)

[2] "*Bels m'es qu' ieu chant in aiselh mes,*" etc. (Raynouard, vol. iii., p. 77.)

Ah, then anew
The yearning cometh, strong,
For bliss more true,
Whose lack my soul doth wrong,
Which, if I have not, I must die erelong.

The next is not quite so tender: —

When leaves expand upon the hawthorn-tree,[1]
And the sun's rays are dazzling grown and strong,
And birds do voice their vows in melody
And woo each other sweetly all day long,
And all the world sways to love's influence,
Thou only art unwilling to be won,
Proud beauty, in whose train I mope and moan
Denied, and seem but half a man to be.

Then there is a very fanciful little piece in an odd but melodious measure, which runs thus: —

Such is now my glad elation,[2]
All things change their seeming;
All with flowers — white, blue, carnation —
Hoary frosts are teeming;
Storm and flood but make occasion
For my happy scheming;
Welcome is my song's oblation,
Praise outruns my dreaming.

[1] "*Quand la fuelha sobre l'albre s'espan,*" etc. (Raynouard, vol. iii., p. 49.)

[2] "*Tant ai mon cor plen de joya,*" etc. ("Parnasse Occitanien," page 7.)

Oh, ay! this heart of mine
Owns a rapture so divine,
Winter doth in blossoms shine,
  Snow with verdure gleaming!

When my love was from me riven,
  Steadfast faith upbore me;
She for whom I so have striven
  Seems to hover o'er me;
All the joys that she hath given
  Memory can restore me;
All the days I saw her, even,
  Gladden evermore me.
Ah, yes! I love in bliss;
All my being tends to this;
Yea, although her sight I miss,
  And in France deplore me.

Yet, if like a swallow flying
  I might come unto thee,
Come by night where thou art lying,
  Verily I 'd sue thee,
Dear and happy lady, crying,
  I must die or woo thee,
Though my soul dissolve in sighing
  And my fears undo me.
Evermore thy grace of yore
I with folded hands adore,
On thy glorious colors pore,
  Till despair goes through me.

This threatens to become commonplace. Nevertheless the whole of the lyric sings itself

in a very remarkable manner; and the remainder, which need not be inflicted on the reader, is interesting from an allusion it contains to the story of Tristram and Iseult, with which the poet probably became acquainted in Normandy, and which is thus shown to have been popular and familiar as far back at least as the middle of the twelfth century. We now subjoin, though with much diffidence, from our conscious inability to do them justice, portions of two songs in Bernard's most perfect style, both of which appear to have been addressed to Eleanor, — the one, perhaps, while she was yet in Normandy, the other after her departure for England.

When I behold on eager wing[1]
The sky-lark soaring to the sun,
Till e'en with rapture faltering
He sinks in glad oblivion,
Alas, how fain to seek were I
The same ecstatic fate of fire!
Yea, of a truth I know not why
My heart melts not with its desire!

Methought that I knew every thing
Of love. Alas my lore was none!
For helpless now my praise I bring
To one who still that praise doth shun,

[1] "*Quand vei la laudeta mover,*" etc. (Raynouard, vol. iii., p. 68.)

One who hath robbed me utterly
Of soul, of self, of life entire,
So that my heart can only cry
For that it ever shall require.

For ne'er have I of self been king,
Since the first hour, so long agone,
When to thine eyes bewildering,
As to a mirror, I was drawn.
There let me gaze until I die;
So doth my soul of sighing tire,
As at the fount, in days gone by,
The fair Narcissus did expire.

The metre of the next is more constraining: —

When the sweet breeze comes blowing[1]
From where thy country lies,
Meseems I am foreknowing
The airs of Paradise.
So is my heart o'erflowing
For that fair one and wise
Who hath my glad bestowing
Of life's whole energies,
For whom I agonize
Whithersoever going.

I mind the beauty glowing,
The fair and haughty eyes,
Which, all my will o'erthrowing,
Made me their sacrifice.

1 "*Quand la douss' aura venta.*" (Raynouard, vol. iii., p. 84.)

Whatever mien thou'rt showing,
Why should I this disguise?
Yet let me ne'er be ruing
One of thine old replies:
Man's daring wins the prize,
But fear is his undoing.

We come now to the name of William of Cabestaing, and the reader is requested to accept for just what it is worth the tragic tradition of him and his lady-love. Incredible as the tale appears, it is given with but trifling variations by an unusual number of writers; and, in the absence of all conflicting testimony, we, at least, shall not attempt to mar its horrible unity. Listen to the ancient biographer: —

"William of Cabestaing was a cavalier of the country of Rossillon, which borders on Catalonia and Narbonne. He was a very attractive man in person, and accomplished in arms and courtesy and service. Now in his country there was a lady called Lady Soremonda [elsewhere she is called Margaret], the wife of Raymond of Castle Rossillon; and Raymond was high-born and evil-minded, brave and fierce, rich and proud. And William of Cabestaing loved the lady exceedingly and made songs about her,

and the lady, who was young and gay, noble and fair, cared more for him than for any one else in the world. And this was told to Raymond of Castle Rossillon, who, being a jealous and passionate man, made inquiries and found that it was true, and set a watch over his wife. And there came a day when Raymond saw William pass with but few attendants, and he killed him. Then he had his head cut off, and the heart taken out of his body. And the head he had carried to his castle, and the heart he had cooked and seasoned, and gave it to his wife to eat. And when the lady had eaten it, Raymond of Castle Rossillon said to her, 'Do you know what you have eaten?' She said, 'No, except that it was a very good and savory viand.' Then he told her that it was the heart of William of Cabestaing which she had eaten, and to convince her he made them show her the head; which when the lady saw and heard she swooned, but presently came to herself and said, 'My lord, you have given me such excellent food that I shall eat no more at all.' When he heard this, he sprang upon her with his sword drawn and would have smitten her upon the

head, but she ran to the balcony and flung herself over, and perished on the spot. The tidings flew through Rossillon and all Catalonia, that William of Cabestaing and the lady had come to this dreadful end, and that Raymond had given William's heart to the lady to eat. And there was great sorrow and mourning in all that region, and at last the story was told to the King of Aragon, who was the seignior both of Raymond of Castle Rossillon and of William of Cabestaing. Then the king went to Perpignan, in Rossillon, and summoned Raymond to appear before him. And when Raymond was come, the king had him seized, and took away from him all his castles and every thing else which he had, and caused the castles to be destroyed, and put him in prison. But William of Cabestaing and the lady he had conveyed to Perpignan and buried under a monument before the door of the church, and the manner of their death he had depicted on the monument, and gave orders that all the ladies and cavaliers in the country of Rossillon should visit the monument every year. And Raymond of Castle Rossillon died miserably in the King of Aragon's prison." This king

must have been Alphonse II., who held the suzerainty of Rossillon in 1181, and who had no successor of his own name upon the throne of Aragon for nearly two hundred years. The severity of the punishment which he inflicted marks the deep impression made by Raymond's brutal revenge, and the extraordinary loathing which it excited. The story was too fascinating in its horror not to be repeated with other names; and accordingly we have the tale of Raoul (or Renard), Châtelain de Coucy, who died at the siege of Acre in 1192 and in his last moments requested the friend who attended him to have his heart preserved and to carry it home to his mistress, the Lady of Fayel. The Lord of Fayel intercepted the relic and followed the example of Raymond of Rossillon, and the lady starved herself to death. De Coucy's commission was a probable one enough, and accords with the reckless romanticism of the time; but the end of the story is doubtless borrowed from that of the lovers of Rossillon. Read by the lurid light of this monstrous tale, the verses of William of Cabestaing seem animated by a peculiarly personal force and intensity; and if the reader does not discover this in

the following specimens, he may consider the translator to blame: —

There is who spurns the leaf, and turns [1]
The stateliest flower of all to cull;
So on life's topmost bough sojourns
My lady, the most beautiful!
Whom with his own nobility
Our lord hath graced, so she may move
In glorious worth our lives above,
Yet soft with all humility.

Her pleading look my spirit shook
And won my fealty long ago;
My heart's-blood stronger impulse took,
Freshening my colors; and yet so,
No otherwise discovering
My love, I bode. Now, lady mine,
At last, before thy throngèd shrine,
I also lay my offering.

The next is yet more fervid and exalted:

The visions tender [2]
Which thy love giveth me
Still bid me render
My vows in song to thee;
Gracious and slender
Thine image I can see,
Where'er I wend, or
What eyes do look on me.

[1] "*Aissi cum selh que laissa 'l fuelh.*" (Raynouard, vol. iii., p. 118.)

[2] "*La dous consire.*" (Raynouard, vol. iii.)

Yea, in the frowning face
Of uttermost disgrace,
Proud would I take my place
  Before thy feet,
Lady, whose aspect sweet
Doth my poor self efface,
And leave but joy and praise.

. . . . . .

Who shall deny me
  The memory of thine eyes?
Evermore by me
  Thy lithe, white form doth rise.
If God were nigh me
  Alway, in so sure wise,
Quick might I hie me
  Into his Paradise!

This was, perhaps, the strain which the troubadour was trying on the day when Raymond overtook him "followed by but few attendants."

THE SONGS OF THE TROUBADOURS.

II.

PASSING by the names of Gui d'Uisel, who bore a part in some rather spirited *tensons*, or poetical dialogues, yet extant, but whose other poems are deficient in tenderness and grace; of Gaucelm Faidit, of whom the record says, that "he went about the world for twenty years without making either himself or his songs acceptable;" of Peire Roger and Peirol, we come to those of the two Arnauts, — Arnaut Daniel and Arnaut de Maroill, or Marveil. To Arnaut Daniel was awarded, within a century after his death, distinguished praise by both Dante and Petrarch. Dante describes, in the twenty-sixth canto of the "Purgatorio," a meeting with him in the shades; and Petrarch, speaking of him and Arnaut de Maroill, calls the latter "the less famous Arnaut." Judging by those of their remains which we possess, the distinction seems a very strange one. The verses of Arnaut Daniel are chiefly remarkable

for an extraordinary ingenuity and complexity in the arrangement of their rhymes, for verbal conceits which are necessarily untranslatable, and for the first introduction into the Romance rhythm of a sort of verbal echo, which was afterwards much more skilfully managed by Raimon de Miraval. But the modest beauties of Arnaut de Maroill's verse are at least of a universal and enduring kind. This is his story: "Arnaut de Maruelh was of the bishopric of Peiragorc, of a castel [that is, a castle domain] named Maruelh, a clerk, and lowly born. And because *he could not live on his letters* [a difficulty not confined to Provence and the twelfth century], he travelled about the world, and he knew how to *find*, and was very skilful. And his stars led him to the court of the Countess of Burlas, a daughter of the celebrated Count Raymond,[1] and wife of that Viscount of Beziers who was surnamed Taillefer. This Arnaut sang well and was a good reader of romance. He was handsome, too, and the countess distinguished him greatly. So he became enamoured of her and made songs about her, but dared not communicate them to her, wherefore he said that

[1] This was Raymond V. of Toulouse.

others had made them. But love compelled him, as he says in one song: —

'The frank bearing which I cannot forget,' etc.

This was the song in which he discovered his love. And the countess did not repulse him, but heard his prayer and encouraged him; for she put him in armor and gave him the honor of singing and *finding* for her. So he was a man esteemed at court. Then made he many good songs by which we judge that he had great sorrow and great joy."

"You have heard how Arnaut came to love the Countess of Burlas, the daughter of the brave Count Raymond, and mother of that Viscount de Beziers whom the French slew when they took Carcassonne.[1] The viscountess was called De Burlas, because she was born in the castle of Burlas. She liked Arnaut well, and King Alphonse (of Castile), who also had designs upon her, perceived her kindness for the

[1] In 1209, at the beginning of the Albigenses war. This Viscount de Beziers was the chivalric Raymond Roger, the young and far braver nephew of Raymond VI. of Toulouse. He was not, however, killed at the siege, but languished three months in prison, at the end of which time the execrable Simon de Montfort gave orders that he should "die of dysentery," and he was accordingly poisoned.

troubadour. And the king was extremely jealous; . . . so he accused her concerning Arnaut, and *said so much, and made her say so much*, that she gave Arnaut his dismissal, and forbade him to come into her presence any more, or to sing of her. When Arnaut received his *congé*, he was sorrowful above all sorrow, and went away from her and her court like a man in despair. He went to William of Montpellier, who was his friend and seignior, and stayed with him a great while; and there he plained and wept, and made that song which says: —

'Mot eran dous miei cossir.'"

We know the date of the Viscount de Beziers's marriage to Adelaide de Burlas (1171), and from this we infer the principal dates of Arnaut's history. He was certainly the contemporary of William of Cabestaing, and may well have heard from his own lips the later songs of Bernard of Ventadour, the best of which are hardly sweeter than this of Arnaut's: —

Softly sighs the April air,
Ere the coming of the May;[1]

[1] "*Bel m'es quan lo vens m'alena.*" (Raynouard, vol. iii., p. 208.)

Of the tranquil night aware,
  Murmur nightingale and jay;
Then, when dewy dawn doth rise,
  Every bird in his own tongue
Wakes his mate with happy cries;
  All their joy abroad is flung.

Gladness, lo! is everywhere
  When the first leaf sees the day;
And shall I alone despair,
  Turning from sweet love away?
Something to my heart replies,
  Thou too wast for rapture strung;
Wherefore else the dreams that rise
  Round thee when the year is young?

One, than Helen yet more fair,
  Loveliest blossom of the May,
Rose-tints hath and sunny hair,
  And a gracious mien and gay;
Heart that scorneth all disguise,
  Lips where pearls of truth are hung, —
God, who gives all sovereignties,
  Knows her like was never sung.

Though she lead through long despair,
  I would never say her nay,
If one kiss — reward how rare! —
  Each new trial might repay.
Swift returns I 'd then devise,
  Many labors, but not long.
Following so fair a prize
  I could nevermore go wrong.

There is a very long poem of Arnaut's in simple consecutive rhymes, in which the praises of the fair countess are prettily if somewhat monotonously chanted, and the palm is awarded her over a long list of heroines, whose names, however incongruous, betray some acquaintance with literature on our troubadour's part; — Rodocesta and Bibles, Blanchefleur and Semiramis, Thisbe, Leda, and Helen, Antigone, Ismene, and Iseult. And here is that final and fruitless plaint quoted by Arnaut's biographer: —

Sweet my musings used to be,[1]
Without shadow of distress,
Till the queen of loveliness,
Lowly, mild, yet frank as day,
Bade me put her love away;
Love so deeply wrought in me:
And because I answered not,
Nay, nor e'en her mercy sought,
All the joy of life is gone,
For it lived in her alone.

O my lady, hearken thee!
For thy wondrous tenderness,
Nor my faltering cry repress;
Bid thy faithful servant stay;
Deign to keep my love, I pray;
Let me not my rival see!

[1] "*Mot eran dous miei cossir.*" ("Parnasse Occitanien," p. 17.)

That which never cost thee aught
Were to me with rapture fraught.
Who would grudge the sick man's moan
When his pain is all his own?

Thou art wise as thou art fair,
And thy voice is ever kind;
Thou for all dost welcome find,
With a courtesy so bright,
Praise of all it doth invite.
Hope and comforting of care
In thy smile are born and live
Wheresoe'er thou dost arrive.
Not my love doth canonize,
But the truth and thine own price.

Unto one thus everywhere
In the praise of men enshrined,
What 's my tribute unrefined?
And yet, lady of delight,
True it is, however trite.
He shall sway the balance fair
Who a single grain doth give,
Be the poise right sensitive.
So might one poor word suffice
To enhance thy dignities.

It would be an interesting, if not edifying, study in the manners of the time, to consider minutely the long story of Raimon de Miraval's adventures. One of his early biographers remarks, with charming simplicity, that he "loved

a great many ladies, some of whom treated him well, and others ill. Some deceived him; and to these he rendered like for like: but he never deceived honest and loyal ladies." It is also true that he was a favorite with famous and gallant princes, such as Peter II. of Aragon and Raymond Roger, before mentioned, the heroic defender of the Albigenses; and that these princes vied with one another in heaping upon the troubadour presents of rich robes, and steeds and accoutrements of war; whereby the beggarly cavalier, who had inherited only the fourth part of a small estate, was enabled to make a splendid appearance in the world. Nevertheless, although personally brave, he seems not to have been a man of generous nature, and the songs which he has left, though graceful sometimes, and very remarkable for their technical ingenuity, show few traces of genuine feeling. Raimon de Miraval's first mistress was the notorious Loba de Penautier, the wife of a wealthy lord of Carbarés, of whom — that is, of Loba — we shall hear more in connection with Peire Vidal. The fervor and sincerity of the relations of these two may be

guessed from the fact that Loba, who was besieged by numerous lovers, made a feint of encouraging Raimon, because she wished to conceal her real passion for the Count de Foix, also honorably memorable for the part he bore in the religious wars. "For," observes the historian, with the same incredible *naïveté* as before, "a lady was considered lost who openly accepted a powerful baron as her lover." Raimon seems to have continued his formal homage for some little time after he perfectly understood the state of the case between Loba and De Foix. But at last he wearied of the game, as our readers would certainly weary, were we to attempt giving them any thing like a circumstantial account, or even a complete list, of the poet's numerous *affaires*. We pass directly from his first "attachment" to his last, the object of which was also a lady of Carbarés, apparently a younger sister-in-law of Loba, one who herself made some unusual advances to the troubadour. The sport of these two experienced lovers was interrupted in 1208 by the opening of the crusade against the Albigenses; that cruelest of religious wars, in which the early Provençal poetry virtually received its

death-blow. Raimon de Miraval was shut up, with the Count of Toulouse, in the capital of the latter, while Beziers and Carcassonne fell before the onslaught of Simon de Montfort. Thence, when Peter II. of Aragon had come to their assistance, he addressed to the Spanish prince some animated verses, foretelling that, if successful, he would make his name as terrible to the French as it had hitherto been to the Saracens. But Peter fell in the battle of Muret, on the 12th of September, 1213, and Raimon followed the flight into Aragon of the Counts of Toulouse and Foix, and there died, not long after, in a monastery at Lerida. We have attempted, in the paraphrase which follows, to give some idea of the mechanical complexity of Raimon's versification, and of the verbal or syllabic echo, spoken of before, which Arnaut Daniel had introduced: —

Fair summer time doth me delight,
And song of birds delights no less;
Meadows delight in their green dress,
Delight the trees in verdure bright:
And far, far more delights thy graciousness,
Lady, and I to do thy will delight.
Yet be not this delight my final boon,
Or I of my desire shall perish soon!

For that desire, most exquisite
Of all desires, I live in stress,
Desire of thy rich comeliness.
Oh, come, and my desire requite!
Though doubling that desire by each caress,
Is my desire not single in thy sight?
Let me not, then, desiring, sink undone.
To love's high joys, desire be rather prone!
No alien joy will I invite,
But joy in thee to all excess;
Joy in thy grace, nor e'en confess
Whatso might do my joy despite.
So deep the joy, my lady, no distress
That joy shall master; for thy beauty's light
Such joy hath shed for each day it hath shone,
Joyless I cannot be while I live on.

This is enough. We have just managed to hint at the labored quaintness of the verse. But that peculiarity of rhythm which we have called an echo, should have, and very likely did have, a name of its own. There is a hackneyed, yet unspoiled, strain of melody in the death scene in "Lucia," of which the effect upon the ear is almost precisely similar to this in the Provençal.

It would be unfair to the reader to transcribe, otherwise than literally, the manuscript biography of the absurdest of men and troubadours,

Peire Vidal. Thus it runs: "Peire Vidal was of Toulouse, the son of a tanner. He was the best singer in the world, and a good *finder;* and he was the most foolish man in the world, because he thought every thing tiresome except verse. . . . He said much evil of others, and made some verses for which a cavalier de San Gili had his tongue cut, because he proclaimed himself the accepted lover of San Gili's wife. But Oc del Baux treated the wound, and cured him. So, when he was healed, he went away beyond the sea, and brought thence a Greek woman whom he had married in Cyprus; and she gave him to understand that she was the granddaughter of the Emperor of Constantinople, and that, through her, he ought by rights to have the empire. Wherefore he put all his substance into a navy, because he intended to go and conquer the empire; and he assumed the imperial arms, and had himself called emperor and his wife empress. He courted all the fine ladies he saw, and besought them for their love, and talked Oc to them, for he deemed himself a universal lover, and that any one would die for him. And he always had fine horses and

armor, and an imperial chair (or throne), and thought he was the best knight in the world, and the most loved of ladies. Peire Vidal, as I have said, courted all fine ladies; . . . and, among others, he courted my Lady Adelaide, the wife of Barral, the Lord of Marseilles, . . . and Barral knew it well. . . . So, there came a day when Peire Vidal knew that Barral was away, and the lady alone in her chamber, and he went in and found her sleeping, and kneeled down and kissed her lips. Feeling the kiss, and thinking that it was Lord Barral, she started up, smiling, then looked and saw that it was that fool of a Peire Vidal (*e vi lo fol de Peire Vidal*), and began to make a great outcry. Her women rushed in, crying 'What is this?' And Peire Vidal fled. Then the lady sent for Lord Barral, and loudly complained of Peire for kissing her, and wept, and prayed that he might be punished. Then Lord Barral, like a brave man, made light of the thing, and reproved his wife for her distress. . . . . But Peire Vidal was frightened, and took ship for Genoa, where he remained until he went over-seas with King Richard. . . . He remained a long time in

foreign parts, not daring to return to Provence until Lord Barral, who was well disposed toward him, as you have heard, prayed his wife to pardon the kiss, and make him (Peire) a present of it. So Barral sent Peire his wife's good wishes, and ordered him to return. And back he came, with the greatest rejoicing, to Marseilles, and was well received by everybody, and every thing was forgiven him; wherefore Peire made the famous song: —

'Pos tornat soi en Proensa.'

. . . [Afterwards] he fell in love with Loba de Penautier, and with Madame Stephania, of Sardinia, and with Lady Raimbauda de Biolh. Loba was of Carbarés, and out of compliment to her Peire Vidal had himself called Wolf, and wore a wolf on his arms. And he caused himself to be hunted in the mountains of Carbarés, with dogs and mastiffs and leverets, as wolves are hunted; and he wore a wolf-skin, to give himself the appearance of a wolf. And the shepherds, with their dogs, hunted him, and abused him so that he was carried for dead to the inn of Loba de Penautier. As soon as she knew

that it was Peire Vidal, she began to scoff at him for his folly, and her husband likewise, and they received him with great merriment. But her husband had him taken and conveyed to a retired place, and did the best he could with him, and kept him till he was well."

Happily the craze of Peire appears chiefly in his actions, and many of his verses are unusually sane and elegant. We give the song mentioned above as addressed to Adelaide on his return to Marseilles. The grace and good-nature of the original sufficed, no doubt, to atone for its undeniably saucy and perfunctory air. It is also interesting from the allusion in the sixth verse —which is the fifth in Raynouard's text—to the fancied return of King Arthur, either in the person of Cœur de Lion himself, in whose train Peire went to the Holy Land, or, more probably, in that of his presumptive heir, Arthur of Brittany, the victim of John

Now into Provence returning,[1]
Well I know my call to sing
To my lady some sweet thing,
Full of gratitude and yearning.

1 "*Pos tornatz sui en Proensa.*" (Raynouard, vol. iii. p 321.)

Such the tribute still whereby
Every singer, nobly taught,
Favor of his queen hath bought,
Ever loving learnedly;
Like the rest, then, why not I?

Sinless, and yet pardon earning
By the penitence I bring,
Grace from grievance gathering,
Yea, and hope from anger burning!
Bliss in tears I can descry,
Sweet from bitter I have brought,
Courage in despair have sought,
Gained, in losing, mightily,
And in rout met victory!

Fearless, then, my fate concerning,
In my choice unwavering,
If, at last, I see upspring
Honor in the place of scorning.
All true lovers far and nigh
Shall take comfort from the thought
Of the miracle I wrought,
Drawing fire from snow, and aye
Sweetest draught the salt wave by!

I can hail her very spurning,
Bow to her abandoning,
Though her mien my heart should wring,
Well her sovereign right discerning
Me to give, or sell, or buy!

That man's wisdom, sure, is naught
Who would bid me loathe my lot.
Pain she gives is, verily,
But a kind of ecstasy!

Blame not, then, my hope's adjourning:
Have the Britons not their king,
Arthur, for whose tarrying
Long the land did sit in mourning?
Nor can any me deny
The one prize for which I fought,
The one kiss that once I caught.
Yea, the theft of days gone by
She hath made a charity!

Once more, in the case of Raimbaut de Vaqueiras, we are fain to throw aside all attempt at critical examination and selection, and simply quote the text of the early biographer. The reader will please compare the manner of telling the tale of the mantle with the similar incident of the sword and circlet in the story of "Pelleas and Etard" or Ettarre, so solemnly and touchingly rehearsed by Tennyson in the eighth idyl of the complete edition. It will furnish him once for all with a measure of the strange difference in native moral sense between the races who cultivated the troubadour and the *trouvère* poetry.

"Raimbaut de Vaqueiras was the son of a poor cavalier of Provence, of the Castle of Vaqueiras. And Raimbaut became a *jongleur* and was a long while with the Prince of Orange, William of Baux. He was skilled in singing and in making couplets and *sirventes*, and the Prince of Orange did him great honor and favors for it, and made him to be generally known and praised. Yet Raimbaut left him (the Prince of Orange) and went to the Marquis Boniface of Montferrat, and was long established at his court also. And he grew in wit and wisdom and soldierly accomplishments, and became enamoured of the marquis's sister, my Lady Beatrice, the wife of Henry of Carret, and found many good songs about her, and it was thought that she was favorably disposed toward him. Now you have heard who Raimbaut was, and how he came to honor, and by whom. So, as I said, when the marquis had knighted him, he fixed his affections on my Lady Beatrice, who was also the sister of my Lady Adelaide de Salutz. He loved and desired her greatly, taking care that no one should suspect it, and he enhanced her reputation very much, and gained for her many friends,

both men and women. And she received him flatteringly, but he was dying of apprehension because he dared not openly ask her love nor confess that he had set his heart upon her. But as a man distraught, he told her that he loved a very distinguished lady, and knew her very intimately, but dared not speak, nor betray his feeling, nor ask her for her love, because of her high consideration. And he prayed her in God's name to advise him whether he should speak out the wish of his heart, or perish in silent devotion. That gentle lady, my Lady Beatrice, when she heard this, and knew the admiration of Raimbaut, having plainly perceived before that he was dying of love for her, was touched by his passion and his piety. And she said, 'Raimbaut, it is well known that every faithful friend loves a gentle lady in such wise that he fears to betray his love. But sooner than die, I would counsel him to speak and pray her to take him for a servitor and friend. For if she is wise and courteous she will not despise him. So this is the advice which I give you. Ask her to receive you for her cavalier. For you are such an one that any lady in the

universe might so take you, as Adelaide, the Countess of Salutz holds Peire Vidal; and the Countess of Burlas, Arnaut de Maroill; and my Lady Mary, Gaucelm Faidit; and the Lady of Marseilles, Folquet.' . . . When Lord Raimbaut heard the comfortable advice which she gave, . . . he told her that she was herself the lady whom he loved, and concerning whom he had asked advice. And my Lady Beatrice told him that it was well done, . . . and that she would accept him for her cavalier. Lord Raimbaut did then exalt her fame to the utmost of his ability, and it was then he made the song which begins, —

'Era m' requier sa costum e son us.'

"Now it came to pass that the lady lay down and fell asleep beside him, and the marquis, her husband, who loved her well, found them so, and was wroth. But, like a wise man, he forbore to touch them, only he took his own mantle and covered them with it, and took that of Raimbaut and went his way. And when Raimbaut arose he knew well what had happened, and he took the mantle of the marquis and sought him straightway, and kneeled before him

and prayed for mercy. And the marquis perceived that Raimbaut knew how he had been discovered, and he recalled all the pleasure which Raimbaut had given him in divers places. And because Raimbaut had said softly, in order that he might not be understood to be bespeaking pardon, *that he would forgive the marquis for putting on his robe*, those who overheard thought that all this was because the marquis had taken Raimbaut's mantle. And the marquis forgave him and made answer that he would wear his mantle no more. And only they two understood it. After that it came to pass that the marquis went with his forces into Roumania, and with great help from the church conquered the kingdom of Thessalonica. And there Lord Raimbaut distinguished himself by the feats which he performed, and there he was rewarded with great lands and revenues, and there he died. And concerning the deeds of his liege lord he made a song which has been transmitted by Peire Vidal which begins, —

'Cant ai ben dig del Marquis.'"

It was in 1204 that Raimbaut embarked from Venice for the East, his master, Montferrat,

having been chosen leader of the expedition of that year in place of Thibaut of Champagne, who had died just as all things were made ready for departure two years before. This was the famous expedition which digressed to Constantinople, and expended its consecrated energies in the capture of that city and the subjugation of the Greek empire. The Marquis of Montferrat received the kingdom of Thessalonica as his share in the spoils of this victory, and thence he overran nearly the whole of Greece. Raimbaut was constantly with him and won abundant laurels; but underneath all the excitement and splendor of this adventurous life he seems to have carried a heart haunted by homesick longings and melancholy presentiments, which were soon to be justified. He fell in battle in the same year with his master, 1207, possibly upon the same field. The song in which he is said to have celebrated the fame of Montferrat is invariably ascribed in the collections to Peire Vidal. There is also an extremely interesting piece, transcribed at length by Fauriel, a sort of impetuous declaration of independence of the tyranny of love, the text of which is not in Raynouard's collection, nor in

any other accessible to ourselves. We give a few verses out of the song first cited in the Life just quoted, and the whole of one of Raimbaut's latest pieces, a really noble and affecting lament composed in Roumania : —

Now Love, who will have sighs, desires, and tears,[1]
  Demands his wonted tribute, even of me.
  And I, who have received the gift to see
The loveliest lady of all mortal years,
Obey. She is my surety sincere,
  Love will be glorious gain, and never loss;
  Great are my hope and courage, even because
I seek the one best treasure of our sphere.

For since my lady hath not any peers,
  Matchless in all the past my love must be;
  Thisbe loved Pyramus less utterly.
Hers am I, and my vow she kindly hears;
Yea, and thus lifted o'er all others here,
  And very rich, and versed in honor's laws,
  She for the worthy keeps her sweet applause,
While the base know her lofty and austere.

Wherefore not Percival, when to loud cheers
  The red knight's arms in Arthur's court bore he,
  Received his honors more exultantly
Than I, nor ever keener death-pang tears

[1] "*Era m' requier sa costum e son us.*" (Raynouard, vol. iii., p. 258.)

The breast of Tantalus than I should bear,
Did she her bounty stint, from whatso cause,
Who is earth's clearest, without any flaws,
And keen of wit, and innocent of fear.

Of the lay which follows, it may be remembered that Mistral quotes the first verse, to illustrate the tender sorrows of his friend Aubanel. Owing to the length of the piece, and the difficulty of dividing it, I have, for once, abandoned the attempt to keep the same rhyme in the corresponding lines of each stanza, but otherwise the form of the original is preserved. I have not been able to establish the identity of the "English lord" — evidently a man of note, though not the king — to whom the poem seems to have been addressed, in reply, perhaps, to some friendly challenge: —

Nor winter-tide, nor Easter-tide,[1]
Nor cloudless air, nor oak-wood fair,
Gladden me more; for joy seems care,
And heavy all was once my pride;
And leisure hours are weary while
Now hope no more doth on me smile.
And I, who sprang to gallantry
And love like fishes in the sea,

[1] "*No m' agrad ivers ni pascors.*" ("Parnasse Occitanien," p. 8.)

Now both of these are from me gone,
Live like an exile, sad and lone.
All other life to me is death,
All other joy discourageth.

The flower of love is fallen away,
And the sweet fruit; the grass and grain,
I sang full many a pleasant strain
Thereof, and honor found that way.
But love, that lifted me o'er all,
Ay, love itself hath wrought my fall.
And but that I would scorn to show
A coward face before my woe,
I 'd put my life out like a flame,
And quench my deeds, and blot my name;
So deepeneth in my memory
Despair that one day brought to me.

But honor's voice commands me thus:
"Thou shalt not, in thy mood forlorn,
Thy foes fulfil with gleeful scorn,
Of thine old praise oblivious."
Nor will I. Blows I yet can deal,
And wear a merry mask with skill
Before a Greek or Latin horde,
While he who girt me with my sword,
My marquis, doth the pagan fight.
For since this world first saw the light,
Never hath God such conflict thrown
On any race as on our own.

Resplendent arms and warriors bold,
And battle given, and joust arrayed,
Engine and siege and flashing blade,
And toppling walls, or new, or old,
As in a dream, I hear, I see;
For what save love availeth me?
Yea, I myself, in harness brave,
Ride forth to strike, to fell, to save,
And laurel still, and treasure, win,
But never more that joy within;
The world is but a desert-shore,
And my songs comfort me no more.

Not Alexander in his pride,
Nor Charlemagne, nor Ludovic;
Held court like ours. Not Emeric,
Nor Roland, with his warriors tried,
E'er won so great a victory
O'er half so rich a realm as we.
Laws have we given, and they 're obeyed,
And kings and dukes and emperors made,
And decked our castles for delight,
In Mussulman or Arab sight,
And cleared each way, and oped each gate,
From Brindes to St. Georges's Strait.

Yet what to me, brave English lord,
Are spoils like these and glory worth,
Who sought no other boon on earth
Save to adore and be adored?
Deem not my splendid heritage
A single sorrow can assuage.

The more increaseth here my pelf,
The more I mourn and scorn myself.
My fair and gracious cavalier[1]
Is wroth with me, is far from here;
A wound like mine no healing hath,
But ever-growing pain and wrath.

Yet thou, sweet seigneur, warrior high,
Great both in arms and courtesy,
Thou dost a little comfort give,
Tempting me yet awhile to live.

We twain will make Damascus cower,
Jerusalem restore to power,
And wrest the sacred Syrian land
From pagan Turks' relentless hand.

Shame on us, laggard pilgrims all,
Save those who nobly fight and fall!
Shame on our courts, and court we strife!
For death availeth more than life!

In this lament of Raimbaut de Vaqueiras, we seem to hear the trumpet contending with the lute; and in the clang of its abrupt close, the harsher strain prevails. It was ominous of the change which was immediately to pass upon Provençal song, the rapid, but not inglo-

[1] Raimbaut called Beatrice his "Bel Cavalier," because he once surprised her practising a sword exercise all by herself.

rious, decline of which was already decreed. The domestic crusade of the Roman church against the heretics of Albigeois was formally inaugurated in 1208, one year after the death, in the Orient, of Raimbaut and his master, Boniface of Montferrat. We are rather used to regard that infamous war — the strange horrors by which it was attended, and the appalling desolation of some of earth's most delightful regions which it entailed — from a merely theological point of view. In reality, it was a conflict involving a great variety of social and political interests, and in its lingering catastrophe many hopes perished which were wholly of this world. It was, in fact, or it became, a match between the great feudal nobles and the clergy; between the princes of the province and the fast-growing central power of France, always highly orthodox, and in strict alliance with the court of Rome. It was hardly more than incidentally and symbolically the resistance of darkness to light; priestly tyranny to the progress of free thought; regnant superstition to simple faith. The struggle lasted for about a generation, and our indignant sympathies are

with the conquered side: less, however, because that side had a monopoly of piety, than because it was, broadly speaking, the side of chivalry, culture, and common sense. We are glad to find that our troubadours, almost to a man, espoused the nobler and worse-fated cause; but we can see that, from the nature of their avocations and their personal relations with the great Provençal nobles, it could hardly have been otherwise.

One of them, indeed, Folquet of Marseilles, whom the chagrin of disappointed love had early driven into the cloister, and who had been made Bishop of Toulouse while yet a comparatively young man, won an immortality of dishonor, by the ingenious atrocity with which he persecuted the heretics and their defenders; and one other, Perdigon, a man of considerable gifts, but of the basest origin, turned traitor to his seignior and his first patron, Raymond of Toulouse, and accompanied the embassy which went to Rome, under the leadership of William of Baux, to demand the intervention of the Pope on behalf of sound, old-fashioned doctrine. In his own person Perdigon was sufficiently pun-

ished. His new master tired of him; his apostasy to the cause of the south made him execrated among his countrymen; he fell into abject poverty, and with difficulty found even a monastery to afford him an asylum in his last days. With these exceptions, the poets of Occitania were true to the cause of their country's independence, both spiritual and political, and lifted up impassioned appeals against her subjugation.

Some of their greatest names are most associated with this unquiet latter time. This is true of him whom the ancient authorities generally agree in pronouncing the first of Provençal poets, Guiraut de Bornelh, or Borneil.[1] "There was never a better troubadour," are the words of his biographer, "either among those who went before or those who came after him; and the manner of his life was on this wise: all winter he studied in the school,[2] and all sum-

[1] Dante, however, in the "Purgatorio," expresses no little indignation with those who insist on ranking Guiraut above his own favorite, Arnaut Daniel. But Dante's literary judgments were apt to be biased.

[2] This confirms Fauriel's idea, that there were institutions where the troubadour poetry was formally taught. Fauriel even thinks that there must have been such before the days of William of Poitiers; but of this there does not seem to be sufficient evidence.

mer he journeyed from court to court, accompanied by two *jongleurs*, who performed his songs. He no longer desired to marry; but whatever he gained he gave to his poor relatives, or to the church of the town where he was born." There is something tantalizing in the brevity of this notice, more particularly because it conveys the idea of an unwonted seriousness and nobility in the poet's character. And it is certain that Guiraut de Bornelh was the true maker and master of the *chanson*, and that his love-poems, though occasionally obscure, have an emotional depth and an equality of power surpassing those even of Bernard of Ventadour. When, in his later years, he swept the lyre with a sterner hand, and bewailed his country's misfortunes, and the decadence of her chivalric glories, there was dignity in his grief, and even grandeur. The date of his death is disputed; but it could not well have occurred later than 1230, and even then he must have been very old.

The first half of the thirteenth century is also the epoch of Peire Cardenal. If Bernard of Ventadour was the sweetest minstrel among

the troubadours, and Guiraut de Bornelh their loftiest poet, Peire Cardenal was indisputably the subtlest and most intellectual spirit among them all. His day was not an auspicious one for the conceits and amenities of love; but his moral appeals and laments are full of wrathful eloquence, and he searches the dark places of human destiny, the origin of evil, the mystery of free-will, with a desperate intrepidity almost equal to that of Omar Khayam. "Who," he cries, in the beginning of one of his pieces, "desires to hear a *sirvente* woven of grief, embroidered with anger? I have spun it already, and I can make its warp and woof."[1] And there is another, in which he rehearses the bold defence which he will make when he finds himself arraigned before the judgment-bar of God. This does not come properly within our scope; and we shall therefore return to our first theme, and close these fragmentary and, as many may well think, arbitrary illustrations, with three specimens of a peculiar order of love-song, the *aubado*, or morning counterpart of the serenade.

[1] "*Qui volra sirventes auzir?*" (Raynouard, "Lexique Roman," vol. i., p. 446.)

Despite the superficial and apparently regular resemblance of sentiment and circumstance between the three, they are as wide apart in time as possible, and their dates embrace nearly the whole illustrious period of Occitanian song. That of the first, which we incline to regard as the most perfect flower of Provençal poesy, cannot be precisely fixed; but it is apparently very early, and the nameless author was undoubtedly a woman. The second was written by Guiraut de Bornelh in his prime. The third is by the last of the noteworthy troubadours, Bertrand of Alamanon. The fanciful song of Magali, in "Mirèio," is also an *aubado*, thoroughly modern and highly artificial. If the reader will take the trouble to compare it with the "simple and sensuous" lay which follows, he will fully realize all the likeness and the unlikeness existing between the reproduction and the reality.

Under the hawthorns of an orchard-lawn,[1]
She laid her head her lover's breast upon,
Silent, until the guard should cry the dawn.
Ah God! Ah God! Why comes the day so soon?

[1] "*Dans un vergier en fuelha d'albespi.*" (Bartsch, "Chrestomathie Provençale," p. 98.)

I would the night might never have passed by!
So wouldst thou not have left me, at the cry
Of yonder sentry to the whitening sky.
Ah God! Ah God! Why comes the day so soon?

One kiss more, sweetheart, ere the melodies
Of early birds from all the fields arise!
One more, without a thought of jealous eyes!
Ah God! Ah God! Why comes the day so soon?

And yet one more under the garden wall;
For now the birds begin their festival,
And the day wakens at the sentry's call.
Ah God! Ah God! Why comes the day so soon?

'T is o'er! He 's gone. Oh, mine in life and death!
But the sweet breeze that backward wandereth,
I quaff it, as it were my darling's breath.
Ah God! Ah God! Why comes the day so soon?

Fair was the lady, and her fame was wide,
And many knights for her dear favor sighed;
But leal the heart out of whose depths she cried,
Ah God! Ah God! Why comes the day so soon?

Here, at least, there is absolute artlessness, a kind of divine abandonment. The next is a world away from this, in its conscious and restrained fervor, separated from it as from a childish Eden, by the flaming sword of perfectly-equipped chivalry.

All-glorious king, who dost illuminate[1]
All ways of men, upon thy grace I wait;
Praying thy shelter for my spirit's queen,
Whom all the darkling hours I have not seen,
And now the dawn is near.

Sleepest or wakest, lady of my vows?
Oh, sleep no more, but lift thy quiet brows;
For now the Orient's most lovely star
Grows large and bright, welcoming from afar
The dawn that now is near.

Oh, sleep no more, but gracious audience give,
What time with the awakening birds I strive,
Who seek the day amid the leafage dark.
To me, to me, not to that other, hark;
For now the dawn is near.

Undo aloft, most fair, thy window-bars,
And look upon the heaven and its stars,
And to my steadfast watchfulness incline,
And doubt me not, lest long regret be thine;
For now the dawn is near.

Aye since we parted in the eve agone,
Slept have I none, but kneeled and prayed alone
Unto the Son of Mary in the sky,
To make thee mine until we both shall die;
And now the dawn is near.

[1] "*Reis glorios, verais lums e clardatz.*" (Raynouard, vol. iii., p. 313.)

From thy balcony, lady, yesternight,
Didst thou me to this vigil not invite?
And was it, then, the suit, the song, to spurn
Of one who would have died thy smile to earn?
And now the dawn is near.

Not so, not so! O heart fulfilled with bliss,
What care I for the morns to follow this?
For now the sweetest soul of mother born
Folds her arms round me till I laugh to scorn
That other I did fear!

And this is the last: —

A brave and merry cavalier[1]
Sang once unto his lady dear
A song like this which ye shall hear.
"Oh sweet, my soul, what comes," he said,
"When day dawns and the night is fled?
Ah ha!
I hear the sentry's call afar;
Up and away!
Behold, the day
Comes following the day-star!

"Oh sweet, my soul, I would," said he,
"That never dawn or day might be:
So were we blest eternally!
At least if thou wilt have it so,
I am thy friend where'er I go.

[1] "*Un cavalier si jazia.*" (Raynouard, vol. v., p. 78.)

Ah ha!
I hear the sentry's call afar;
Up and away!
Behold, the day
Comes following the day-star!

"Oh sweet, my soul, whate'er they say,
There is no grief like ours to-day,
When friend from friend is rent away.
Alas! I know too well," said he,
"How brief one happy night may be.
Ah ha!
I hear the sentry's call afar;
Up and away!
Behold, the day
Comes following the day-star!

"Oh sweet, my soul, yield me belief:
Afar from thee my course were brief;
Slain were I, by my love and grief!
I go, but I shall come again;
Life without thee were void and vain.
Ah ha!
I hear the sentry's call afar;
Up and away!
Behold, the day
Comes following the day-star!

"Oh sweet, my soul, my way I take,
Thine still, although the morning break;
Forget me not, for God's dear sake.

My heart of hearts goes not with me,
It stays for ever more with thee.
Ah ha!
I hear the sentry's call afar;
Up and away!
Behold, the day
Comes following the day-star!"

In point of feeling, these lines are not to be compared with the others. In their sweet but lagging rhythm there is a strange mingling of languor and levity. They are, in fact, already a reminiscence, — the tenuous echo of a music passed by.

THE ARTHURIAD.

TROUBADOURS and Trouvères! The English-speaking student of the early Provençal poetry feels himself constantly solicited and allured by the echoes of that antiphonal singing which men were beginning to essay north of the Loire, and which was fostered with especial enthusiasm at the Norman court, and in the Norman halls of our own ancestral England. While William of Poitiers boasted of the vanquished hearts that vied for his choosing, or dolorously deplored the loves and luxuries which he left behind him when parting for the Holy Land, Wace was chanting the victories of Rollo in Normandy, the exploits of Brutus, and the woes of Lear; and Marie (that prototype of the modern literary lady, who felt that it would be wrong to suffer her powers to lie idle) was weaving into her "Lay of the Honeysuckle" an incident from the amours of Cornish Tristram and Irish Isolt. These are

themes nearer to our Anglo-Norman hearts, or at least our imaginations, than most others of that primitive time: and when some of the foremost singers of our own generation apply themselves to illustrating the incomparable cycle of romances of which these are but the crude beginnings, we can no longer resist their fascination.

It is to be hoped that all true lovers of the laureate will re-read the "Idyls of the King," in the edition of 1875. Here, for the first time, we have these memorable poems — so strangely named idyls, and so unfortunate in the long intervals at which they appeared, and in their lawless manner of straying before the public — arranged in an order which fairly exhibits their unity of purpose, their cumulative interest, and the matchless moral force and beauty of the one story of which they are all — the less equally with the greater — essential parts. We must also conclude, whether willingly or not, that the present is their final arrangement, since the author has himself added an epilogue or *envoi*, in which he formally presents to the reigning queen of England the complete series of poems, of which four of the most famous had

been dedicated, on their first appearance, to the memory of the Prince Consort: —

> "Thou my Queen,
> Not for itself, but through thy living love
> For one to whom I made it o'er his grave
> Sacred, accept this old, imperfect tale,
> New-old, and shadowing sense at war with soul,
> Rather than that gray king whose name, a ghost,
> Streams like a cloud man-shaped from mountain-peak,
> And cleaves to cairn and cromlech still; or him
> Of Geoffrey's book or him of Malleor's."

The fresh touches, which the reader familiar with the separate poems will detect in many parts of the united work, are almost all applied to the central figure of Arthur himself, — a figure which, despite its melancholy grandeur, more than one of the laureate's critics have heretofore pronounced the weakest in his book. The outlines of that figure are now finished and strengthened. The lights of the king's destiny are enhanced, and its shadows deepened. The grandeur of his dream and the cruelty of his disappointment are set in more distinct and affecting contrast than before; and yet the changes and additions are made with so masterly a care and restraint, that the result — for

a wonder in the emendations of this or of any poet — is only and exceedingly beautiful. Some reasons will by and by be given for the private fancy that Mr. Tennyson's Arthurian epic is not exactly, in all respects, what he once meant to make it; but it is fully an epic, vindicating the capacity of the age for that high style of composition, made out of the proper epical material, that is to say, the mythology, the pre-literary traditions, and the first literature of the poet's own country, with much the noblest of all epic heroes, and a marvellously picturesque group of subordinate characters. It can but enhance our admiration of his work, to ascertain just how much of this impressive story the poet found ready to his hand in the ancient metrical and prose romances of England and France, especially in the two English authorities which he distinguishes in his final dedication, and how much we owe to his own inventive genius and exquisite skill in composition. This, in brief, is the argument of the complete poem.

Arthur, believed of men to be the child of King Uther Pendragon and Ygerne, or Igerna, the Queen of Cornwall, was set on the throne

of Britain by the might of the great magician Merlin. For then the Romans no longer ruled in the island, but it was rent by factions and laid waste by heathen hordes from over the seas. And Arthur was, in truth, not Uther's son, but cast up, a babe, out of the stormy sea, being sent by Heaven to appease the land and establish the faith of Christ therein; and he was delivered to Merlin to be brought up. And Merlin sang of him at his coming, "From the great deep to the great deep he goes." Arthur founded a new order of knighthood, called that of the Round Table; and his knights he made swear to uphold the faith of Christ, and right all wrongs of men; and, above all, themselves to live chaste lives, each with the one woman of his sacred choice. Of the knights whom Arthur made, the first in time was Sir Bedivere; but the first in prowess, and his own dearest friend and brother-in-arms, was the famed Sir Launcelot of the Lake. Him Arthur sent to fetch his betrothed bride, Guinevere, out of the land of Cameliard, for she was a princess of that province, and the fairest woman upon earth. After Sir Launcelot, Arthur's greatest knights were

Sir Tristram of Lyoness, Sir Gawain, Sir Gareth, and Sir Modred, sons of Arthur's reputed sister, the Queen of Orkney, and true grandsons of Uther Pendragon; Sir Kay, his foster-brother; Geraint, a tributary prince; Sir Pelleas of the Isles; Sir Galahad; and Sir Percivale. All these kept their vows for a time, and lived purely; and the heathen were overthrown in twelve great battles, and the land was at peace. And Merlin, of his deep wisdom, showed Arthur how to rule, and made the cities of the realm beautiful by his magic arts, and built for the king, on a hill in the ancient city of Camelot, the most glorious palace under the sun. But first the great Sir Launcelot, who had loved Queen Guinevere from the time when he brought her to her wedding, broke his vows, and sinned with her; and Arthur knew it not; nor, being himself incorruptible, so much as dreamed of this treachery for many years. Howbeit, others knew, and this sin became the occasion and excuse for many more. For then Sir Tristram of Lyoness loved guiltily Isolt the Fair, the wife of King Mark of Cornwall, and she returned his love; and, in the end, Mark

slew Tristram, not in open fight, but treacherously, having tracked him to his lady's bower. Next, Merlin the Wise was himself beguiled by a fair and wicked woman, — some say a sprite, — who robbed him of his mighty wit, and allured him into some strange prison, so that he was lost to Arthur, and no man saw him more. And Prince Geraint withdrew from Arthur's court, because he had heard the scandal against Queen Guinevere, and would not that his own true wife should be beloved by her. And Sir Pelleas of the Isles, being young and himself spotless, loved a lady who deceived him, and was false with Sir Gawain, the reputed nephew of Arthur, which when Sir Pelleas knew, he went mad for grief and shame. And Sir Galahad and Sir Percivale, who were also pure knights, grieved by the growing baseness of the time, vowed themselves to the quest of the Holy Grail, or cup of the Last Supper; in the hope that if the sacred vessel were brought back among men, their hearts might become clean once more, and the work of the Lord and of the righteous king be revived. And Galahad found the grail, indeed, but was himself immediately caught away to

heaven, and the holy vessel with him; but Percivale went into a monastery, and took vows. There were many other knights also, who, following these, undertook the quest of the Holy Grail, but idly, and from motives of vanity; and, not being themselves pure, they could achieve nothing: but some perished on their adventures, and many went far astray, and returned no more: so that the might of the Round Table was broken, and the heathen were no longer held at bay. Erelong, the treason of Launcelot was discovered to the king, and the queen fled, and found sanctuary with the nuns in the convent of Almesbury; and Launcelot himself withdrew to his own realm over-seas, whither Arthur pursued, and where he besieged him; albeit, Launcelot would not lift his hand against the king who had made him knight. Finally, while Arthur was yet away, Modred revolted and seized the crown; and Arthur, returning, met Modred and his forces in Lyoness; and there was fought a great battle, in which an hundred thousand men were slain, and nearly all the remnant of the Round Table perished. Last of all, Arthur slew Modred in a single contest,

and was himself wounded unto death; but certain queens removed him, by ship, from the battle-field, promising to cure his wounds in the mystic island of Avallon. Howbeit, he returned no more; and the prophecy was fulfilled, — "From the great deep to the great deep he goes."

Now it can hardly be necessary to say that for this mystical and moving tale there is hardly the faintest foundation in veracious history. We may cherish in our secret hearts, but we would blush to have discovered, the wild hope that Dr. Schliemann may yet drain some Welsh lake and lay bare Excalibur, or unearth the sculptured gates of sacred Camelot. What students of early mediæval literature do know for certain, and a gracious point of support they find it, is, that the Normans marched to victory at the battle of Hastings to the unimaginable tune of the "Chanson de Roland," as chanted by one Taillefer, who fell gallantly in the forefront of the invaders, with that rude strain upon his lips. But once planted and at peace in those ill-gotten new homes, — the remote inheritance of which is so particularly glorious, — the Norman gentry must have had but a dreary time of

it; and they early learned to vary the monotony of their indoor entertainments by inviting the performances of the bards and wandering gleemen of the conquered land. Brutus, Lear, Merlin, Arthur, Tristram, Gawain, — these were the heroes whom those gleemen sang, and their names, however barbarous to Norman ears, were new, or at least had been but rarely and faintly heard before in the echoes of Armorican song, and their exploits made an exhilarating variety after the hackneyed tales of the Moorish wars and the monstrous rhymed biographies of Grecian heroes and early saints. We conclude, at all events, that this British lore had come fully into fashion eighty years after the Conquest: for then, in 1147, the enterprising monk Geoffrey of Monmouth, himself a Norman, dedicated to Robert, Earl of Gloucester, his "Historia Britonum," triumphantly announced as a Latin translation out of a "precious treasure" of early manuscript written on parchment, in the ancient British tongue, and brought to light with exultation by Walter, Archdeacon of Oxford, in a convent in Armorica. If such a manuscript ever existed, it was likely enough to have been found

in Armorica, that early civilized and Christianized province, to which so many Britons fled for refuge during the era of the Saxon invasions that it came in time itself to be called Brittany. But whether or no the Walter who discovered it were Walter Mapes the poet, *alias* Calenius, a famous enthusiast in Celtic story, and himself the reputed author of sundry French Arthurian romances of the twelfth century, must depend unhappily, on the date of Calenius's birth, which some of the authorities place later by a few years than the appearance of Geoffrey's book. And it is certainly remarkable that so complete a work in prose should have been composed in any other tongue than monkish Latin, before the adoption by the Normans of the British legendary lore, and the date of the first prose romances. Moreover, there is, so to speak, an absurd consistency, an incredible richness and roundness about Geoffrey's tale, which convince us that at least his Armorican material suffered nothing by its passage through his hands. Curious it is to learn from his conscientious chronology that Brutus, the grandson of Æneas, emigrated to Britain at the time when Eli

governed Israel and the ark of the Lord was taken by the Philistines; that Lear divided his kingdom among his ingrate daughters in the days of Elijah; and that Christ was born in Bethlehem during the reign of Cymbeline. But our present concern is with Geoffrey's Arthur only, — a splendid figure, the clearly defined and obvious prototype of him who continued to shine without a peer in Norman song and story for more than three hundred years. Not until 1485 did Sir Thomas Malory sum up the growth of legend concerning the king and his knights in his "Morte d'Arthur," the latest and finest of the great chivalric romances, whose artless and beautiful phraseology Tennyson himself has not always cared to alter.

The following is the story of Arthur's birth as it is told by Geoffrey, afterwards with more fulness of detail by the French romancers, and, finally, with that added grace of characterization which was far beyond Geoffrey's range, by Malory.

King Uther Pendragon was enamoured of Igerna, the wife of Gorlöis, King of Cornwall; on which account Gorlöis shut her up in the

strong castle of Tintagil, but himself withdrew to another castle, — "hight Terrabil," says Sir Thomas Malory, — where Uther besieged, conquered, and slew him. The king, by the assistance of the magician Merlin, then assumed the appearance of Gorlöis and hastened to Tintagil, where Igerna gave him a wife's welcome. Immediately he dropped his disguise, informed her of her husband's death, and compelled her to wed him. Their child was Arthur.

In this narrative the only supernatural element is the transformation of Gorlöis by Merlin; and Merlin, Geoffrey candidly allows, was not *canny*. He was, by all accounts, the child of a mortal maiden and a spirit descended from one of the angels who fell with Lucifer, and bearing a general resemblance to the Dæmon of Socrates; not a common mode of origin, certainly, but one of which, the historian assures us, divers instances were known.[1] The beautiful fancy of a dragon-shaped vessel, "bright with a shining people on its decks," which appeared

[1] For a monstrous amplification of this bit of "history," with the addition of all manner of unpleasant details, see abstract of the English metrical romance of Merlin, in Ellis's "Specimens of Early English Romances."

off Tintagil on the night of Uther's death without issue, and of the naked babe "descending in the glory of the seas" to the beach at Merlin's feet, is Tennyson's own. He made it, as a poet abundantly may, to correspond with the really ancient and tenacious fable that Arthur, when his lifework was ruined and his kingdom rent, passed to a sleep of ages in the isle of Avallon, but did not die. On the whole, it is worth, for purposes of art, the sacrifice of the rather touching scene in Malory, where Igerna is roughly accused of treasonably protracting the quarrels over the succession, by concealing the circumstances of Arthur's birth: "Then spake Igraine and said, 'I am a woman, and I may not fight. . . . But Merlin knoweth well how King Uther came to me in the castle of Tintagil, in the likeness of my lord that was dead three hours tofore. And after Uther wedded me; and, by his commandment, when the child was born it was delivered to Merlin and nourished by him; and so I saw the child never after, nor wot what is his name, for I knew him never yet.' And there Ulfius said to the queen, 'Merlin is more to blame than ye.'

'Well I wot,' said the queen, 'that I bare a child by my lord, King Uther; but I wot not where he is become.' Then Merlin took King Arthur by the hand, saying, 'This is your mother.' And therewith King Arthur took his mother, Queen Igraine, in his arms and kissed her, and either wept upon other."

The account of Arthur's progressive subjugation of native factions and heathen invaders, in the twelve great battles which Nennius had enumerated as early as the fifth century,[1] is that

[1] "Then it was that the magnanimous Arthur, with all the kings and military force of Britain, fought against the Saxons. And though there were many more noble than himself, yet he was twelve times chosen their commander, and was as often conqueror. The first battle in which he was engaged was at the mouth of the river Gleni. The second, third, fourth, and fifth were on another river, by the Britons called Duglas, in the region Linuis; the sixth, on the river Bassas. The seventh in the wood Celidon, which the Britons call Cat Coit Celidon. The eighth was near Gurnion Castle, where Arthur bore the image of the Holy Virgin, Mother of God, on his shoulders, and through the power of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Mary put the Saxons to flight and pursued them the whole day with great slaughter. The ninth was at the city of Legion, which is called Cair Lion. The tenth was on the banks of the river Trat Treuroit. The eleventh was on the mountain Brenguorn, which we call Cat Bregion. The twelfth was a most severe contest, when Arthur penetrated to the Hill of Badon. . . . For no strength can avail against the will of the Almighty." (Nennius, "History of the Britons," A. D. 452.)

which, in Tennyson, first fires our imagination and enlists our sympathy for the king. In both Geoffrey and Malory this pacification of the realm is dwarfed by comparison with the pompous details of Arthur's Roman war, of victories over the Emperor Lucius Tiberius, a court held at Paris, and a coronation at Rome. All such chimeras the laureate's fine sense of symmetry compelled him to dismiss in a single passage:

"There at the banquet those great lords from Rome,
The slowly fading mistress of the world,
Strode in and claimed their tribute as of yore.
But Arthur spake, 'Behold, for these have sworn
To wage my wars and worship me their king,
The old order changeth, yielding place to new;
And we that fight for our fair father Christ,
Seeing that ye be grown too weak and old
To drive the heathen from your Roman wall,
No tribute will we pay:' so those great lords
Drew back in wrath, and Arthur strove with Rome."

Indeed, a sovereign so enamoured of foreign conquest as Geoffrey's Arthur could hardly claim our sympathy for the ignominious but not very unnatural catastrophe of his reign, which the monk records in these few dry words:—

"As he was beginning to pass the Alps, he had news brought him that his nephew Modred, to whose care he had entrusted Britain, had, by tyrannical and treasonable practices, set the crown upon his own head, and that Queen Guanhumara, in violation of her first marriage, had treasonably married him" (!) This is actually the only time that the gracious Guinevere is mentioned by name in Geoffrey's history, although she is alluded to in his thirteenth chapter, where he gives a description of the king's coronation-feast, far more stately than Malory's transcript from the French, and a worthier preliminary to Tennyson's noble picture of the royal wedding. To this last is added, in the recent edition, a passage full of splendor: —

"Far shone the fields of May through open door,
The sacred altar blossomed white with May,
The sun of May descended on their king,
They gazed on all earth's beauty in their queen,
Rolled incense, and there passed along the hymns
A voice, as of the waters, while the two
Sware at the shrine of Christ a deathless love:
And Arthur said, 'Behold, thy doom is mine:
Let chance what will, I love thee to the death!'
To whom the queen replied with drooping eyes,

'King and my lord, I love thee to the death!'
And holy Dubric spread his hands and spake,
'Reign ye, and live and love, and make the world
Other, and may thy queen be one with thee,
And all this order of thy Table Round
Fulfil the boundless purpose of their king!'"

Nor must we omit here to notice — for this also is new — the strange pæan sung by Arthur's victorious knights as they march in the bridal procession, to the sound of trumpets, through a city "all on fire with sun and cloth of gold;" more especially the refrain, "Fall battle-axe and flash brand," where the movement of the verse expresses so curiously the descent of the heavy-headed primitive weapon.

In a passage which is indirectly of unusual interest, as reflecting the Norman ideal of chivalry in the twelfth century, Geoffrey says that in the reign of Arthur, "Britain had arrived at such a pitch of grandeur that in abundance of riches, luxury of ornaments, and politeness of inhabitants, it far surpassed all other kingdoms. The knights in it, that were famous for chivalry, wore their clothes and arms all of the same color and fashion; and the women also, no less cele-

brated for their wit, wore all the same kind of apparel, and counted none worthy of their love but such as had given proof of their valor in three successive battles. Thus was the valor of the men an encouragement for the women's chastity, and the love of the women a spur to soldiers' bravery."

And this is the sum of what the monk of Monmouth contributes to the epic of Arthur, if we except the matter-of-fact statement to the effect that after Arthur was mortally wounded he had himself conveyed to the island of Avallon, — where, by the way, was situated the Castle Perillous in which Lynette, or Linet, wrought so many cures, — in the hope that he might there be healed.

There is no allusion in Geoffrey's chronicle to the mysterious manner of Merlin's taking-off, although great stress is laid on his weight in Arthur's councils; and his famous prophecy, which the monk had previously translated from an independent source, is incorporated with the "Historia Britonum" entire. Even the comparatively late English metrical romance of Merlin, although ten thousand lines long, is unfinished,

and breaks off in the midst of the war in which Arthur engaged on behalf of Leodogran, the father of Guinevere. But there is little doubt that the story of the great magician's dishonorable death is of French origin, as the name of his enchantress, whether Vivien or Niume, is undoubtedly French. In Malory, Merlin is made to foreshadow his own sombre end, at the same time that he foretells to Arthur the ruin of the kingdom through his marriage with Guinevere.

"'Ah,' said King Arthur, 'ye are a marvellous man, but I marvel much at thy words that I must die in battle.' 'Marvel not,' said Merlin, 'for it is God's will. . . . But I may well be sorry,' said Merlin, 'for I shall die a shameful death, — to be put in the earth quick, — and ye shall die a worshipful death.' . . . So after these quests, it fell so that Merlin fell in dotage on one of the damsels of the lake. But Merlin would let her have no rest. . . . And ever she made Merlin good cheer till she learned of him all manner thing that she desired, and he was asotted upon her that he might not be from her. So on a time Merlin told Arthur that he should

not dure long, but for all his crafts he should be put in the earth quick; and so he told the king many things that should befall, but always he warned the king to keep well his sword and the scabbard, for he told him how the sword and the scabbard should be stolen from him by a woman whom he trusted. Also he told King Arthur that he should miss him; 'Yet had ye lever than all your lands to have me again.' 'Ah,' said the king, 'since ye know of your adventure, purvey for it, and put away by your crafts that misadventure.' 'Nay,' said Merlin, 'it will not be.' So then he departed from the king. And within a while the damsel of the lake departed, and Merlin went with her, evermore, wheresoever she went. And often Merlin would have had her privily away by his subtle crafts. Then she made him swear that he should never do none enchantment upon her, if he would have his will. And so he sware. So she and Merlin went over the seas. . . . And always Merlin lay about the lady to have her love, and she was ever passing weary of him, and fain would have been delivered of him, for she was afeard of him, because he was

a devil's son and she could not put him away by no means. And so it happed on a time that Merlin showed to her in a rock which was a great wonder, and wrought by enchantment, that went under a great stone. So by her subtle working she made Merlin to go under that stone, to let her wit of the marvels there; but she wrought so there for him that he came never out for all the marvels he could do."

It will be seen that Malory has not distributed the balance of censure, so to speak, for the wizard's unhappy end precisely as Tennyson does. But the passage is quoted entire, because it illustrates better and more briefly than almost any other the miraculous development which Tennyson sometimes gives his material. The breathless interest and appalling beauty of the story of "Merlin and Vivien," as we have it in the "Idyls," the sublime fitness of the scenery, the subtle analysis of instinct and motive, and, above all, the irresistible force and solemnity of the lesson conveyed, — they are all here in embryo, in this dreamy fragment of a garrulous old tale. But the power which can evolve the one out of the other seems, to us, like the power

which causes the seed to grow. "What thou sowest, thou sowest not that body which shall be, but bare grain; it may chance of wheat or of some other grain." This is indeed the *maker's* proper function among men; but here we see it almost in its highest exercise. Sir Thomas Malory himself must have possessed no small share of this vivifying and organizing power, or he never could have wrought, as he assuredly has, the heterogeneous materials which he collected from so many sources, into a *naïve*, consistent, and affecting whole. But usually, except in one remarkable instance to be noticed hereafter, Tennyson's mode of treatment is as great an advance in art and in refinement on Malory's, as Malory's is on the crudeness and puerility of Wace, or the lusty coarseness of Thomas the Rhymer of Ercildoune.

The story of "Geraint and Enid" is more purely episodical than any other idyl, and is derived from an entirely independent source. The story of "Gareth and Lynette," as we have it in Tennyson, belongs wholly to the earlier and happier period of Arthur's reign. Its events bear a general resemblance to those

which are recounted, in this instance, very much more at length, in Malory; and the marked peculiarities of Lynette — her rudeness and petulance, and entire lack of the softer graces which belonged, as a rule, to the lady of chivalry — are fully indicated in the old story. In fact, Lynette, or Linet, is called in Malory, the "damsel savage;" although considerable stress is laid on her skill in the arts of healing, which she practised on many a wounded knight besides Gareth, in the Castle Perillous of her beautiful sister, Lyonors. There is a very life-like scene in Malory, where the mother of Gareth, Queen Belicent, alarmed at his protracted absence on his first adventure, appears at Arthur's court, and reproaches the king for the lad's non-appearance, with the true unreasoning fierceness of feminine anxiety. There is also a particularly pretty scene at court, where Gareth and Lyonors finally meet, and both confess to Arthur their love for one another.

"And among all those ladies, she [Lyonors] was named the fairest and peerless. Then, when Sir Gareth saw her, there was many a goodly look and goodly words, that all men of worship

had joy to behold them. Then came King Arthur and many other kings, and Dame Guinevere and the Queen of Orkney, and there the king asked his nephew, Sir Gareth, whether he would have that lady to his wife? 'My lord, wit you well that I love her above all ladies living.' 'Now, fair lady,' said King Arthur, 'what say ye?' 'Most noble king,' said Dame Liones, 'wit you well that my lord, Sir Gareth, is to me more lever to have and hold as my husband than any king or prince; and if I may not have him, I promise you I will never have none. For, my Lord Arthur, he is my first love, and he shall be my last.'" Malory, it will be observed, is that "earlier" author who says, "that Gareth married Lady Lyonors;" and a stately wedding is described; while Arthur is represented as taking rather an active part in bringing about the marriage of Lynette to Sir Gaheris, a comparatively obscure brother of Gareth, Modred, and Gawain, but still a very suitable *parti* for that spirited damsel. Malory's Gareth continues to figure with distinction throughout Arthur's reign, and is closely involved in its catastrophe. He was slain by Launcelot's own hand "un-

wittingly," amid the bloodshed which followed the discovery by Modred of the great knight's treason: thus causing Gawain, who, up to this time, quite consistently with his character in Malory, had been inclined to screen the distinguished lovers from Arthur's wrath, to swear an oath of mortal vengeance against Launcelot, in performing which he was himself slain.

Tennyson's Gawain is identical with the Gawain of Malory, and hardly more elaborated: a brave, unprincipled man, adorned with all chivalric accomplishments, but of a vindictive temper, as unlike as possible to the proud and patient magnanimity of Arthur, Launcelot, and his own young brother, Gareth. "For," says Malory, "after Sir Gareth had espied Sir Gawain's conditions, he withdrew himself from his brother Sir Gawain's fellowship, for he was vengeable, and, where he hated, he would be avenged with murder, and that hated Sir Gareth."

Gawain, though a frequent, is seldom a principal, actor in the great scene of Arthur's life, and the sad story of "Pelleas and Ettarre," in which he figures most conspicuously, is but the briefest of episodes in Malory; illustrating,

hardly less remarkably than the story of "Merlin and Vivien," Tennyson's magnificent power of amplification. It is proper, however, to observe, that the Gawain of all elder romance is a very different person from Malory's, — much more admirable and commonplace. His chivalric rank is second only to that of Launcelot and Tristram. He is the hero of many an honorable adventure, and is confidently identified with the golden-tongued Gwalzmai of the Welsh triads, as Tristram is identified with Tristan the Tumultuous, the son of Tallwyz.

Let us now consider briefly Tennyson's treatment of the world-renowned story of "Tristram and Isolt." The high antiquity of this tale, its peculiar picturesqueness, and the prominent place which it occupies in the Arthurian cycle of romances, including Malory's, of which it constitutes at least a quarter part, would have led us to expect that the laureate would give it more space than he has done in the dreary fragment of "The Last Tournament." That singular poem, as it first appeared independently, did certainly seem to deserve much of the severe criticism which it received for ob-

scurity of style, repulsive details, and inconsequent action. It can hardly be re-read, in its proper connection, without receiving a tribute of admiration. The last ray of sunshine swallowed up in storm, the last gleam of honorable courtesy vanishing in a cynical and lazy libertinism, the last flaming up of passion quenched by a stealthy revenge, — these things, and the dun, sallow tints of latest autumn in which they are all represented, give "The Last Tournament" a marvellous fitness for its place in the thick-coming shadows of an imminent tragedy. And yet every verse of the poem presupposes, on the part of the reader, a previous knowledge of the story of "Tristram and Isolt," which most readers doubtless possess, but which the poet had, artistically speaking, no right to assume. And we cannot rid ourselves of the fancy that he once meant to have told it in full in a separate and earlier idyl. The epic, even in its latest form, falls short by two books of the canonical number. We infer, from the introduction to the fine fragment which first appeared a generation ago, under the title of "Morte d'Arthur," and has since been expanded into the

"Passing of Arthur," that this, in the poet's original scheme, was to have been the eleventh book of the epic. It seems impossible but that the earlier missing canto was to have rehearsed all of the romantic story, except its grim catastrophe, of those lovers who are so constantly compared with Launcelot and Guinevere in all old romance, nay, even poetically styled the only two in the world beside them. Why was this classic tale rejected? Was it because the poet deemed it too hackneyed, or because of its utter impracticability for that strenuous moral purpose which came so palpably to modify his treatment of the Arthurian story, and which must have deepened so fast between the purely æsthetic days of the "Morte d'Arthur," and those of the supreme idyl of "Guinevere"? Sir Walter Scott, in the fascinating preface to his edition of Thomas the Rhymer's "Tristram," speaks of the "extreme ingratitude and profligacy of the hero." In Malory, and apparently in the later French prose-romance which he closely followed, these ugly qualities are veiled by every lesser chivalric grace, by consummate skill in music and the arts of the chase, and by an

almost fantastic magnanimity in combat. But the character is essentially the same. Tristram is the most notorious and the most elegant of libertines; and the full knowledge and open toleration of his intrigues on the part of Arthur himself, as compared with his noble incredulity and righteous wrath when he was himself wronged, constitute the most glaring inconsistency in Malory's romance, and the greatest blemish on the character of his king. In Malory, indeed, the *denouement* of the story, which is the same as that recorded in "The Last Tournament," is retributive, and so may be considered in a general way moral. There is another and much more commonly received ending, which may be called the sentimental, to distinguish it from the other. In this, Tristram, after deserting his wife, Isolt of the White Hands, and dallying a while with his former paramour, Isolt the wife of King Mark, returns again to Brittany, and receives in battle a wound from a poisoned spear, which even the skill of his injured wife is powerless to cure. The sick man takes a fancy that Isolt the queen could cure him, and sends his faithful squire, Gouvernail,

to beg her to come and save his life. His weakness warns him that the least delay will be fatal, and accordingly he orders Gouvernail on his return to the Breton coast to hoist white sails if he shall have prevailed on the queen to accompany him; black, if she shall have refused. Isolt the wife overhears the charge, and heart-sick awaits the return of the vessel: when its approach is announced, and Tristram gasps out a question as to the color of the sails, she tells him a lie, says black, and he dies. And when Isolt the queen arrives, amid the universal lamentation over Tristram, she refuses to survive him.

It would be interesting to know whether the moral or the sentimental ending of the story is the elder. Sir Walter Scott assumes the latter, but does not give his reasons for so doing; and there seems at least a possibility that the moral ending may also be of great antiquity. Thomas of Ercildoune wrote his metrical romance of "Sir Tristram" somewhere about the middle of the thirteenth century. Sir Walter, in the preface and notes to his edition of this ancient English poem, has illustrated it with all the wealth of

his curious antiquarian lore, and argues with much ardor for the Celtic origin and character of the story. He admits, however, that Marie's "Lay of the Honeysuckle," which relates one of its incidents, and two French metrical fragments which correspond much more closely with the Rhymer's version than the later romances, are earlier than his; and the best modern French criticism places them nearly a century earlier. Now the Rhymer's "Tristram" is incomplete. Not only are the illuminations which surmounted the original black-letter cut away from every page, but the last half of the last *fytte* or canto is gone entirely; and it is Scott who supplies the defect by adding the usual sentimental ending of the story in an exquisite imitation of Thomas's own quaint verse, hardly to be distinguished from it in style, and much more tender and delicate in spirit. But it is singular that in one of the old French metrical fragments, whose place is near the end of the story, there is a passage which Sir Walter Scott himself quotes in his preface, for its bearing on another question, where the author, after saying that the tale was even then told in a great many

different ways, proceeds to argue that it is absurd to suppose that Gouvernail could ever have gone to Cornwall and taken away Queen Isolt.[1] How this author eventually disposed of the difficulty, we shall probably never know; but we may safely conclude that it was not exactly in the sentimental fashion. Here is a curious point for future researches.

We have now glanced at the originals of nearly all the great Arthurian heroes whom Tennyson has restored, except the two who move us most deeply, — Launcelot the Peerless, and Galahad the Spotless. To these immor-

[1] " Cist fust par tut la part conçus
E par tut le regne sius,
Qui de l'amur ert parjurers,
Et enuers Ysolt messagers.
Li reis l'en haiet mult forment;
Guaiter le feseit à sa gent;
E cument put-il dunc venir
Sun service à la caert offrir," etc.

" He [Gouvernail] was known in all those parts
And throughout the kingdom
As being privy to the love of [Tristram and Isolt],
And often sent with messages to Isolt.
The king hated him for it profoundly,
And had him watched by his people;
How, then, could he come
To offer his service at the court," etc.

tal figures we must allow a purely French origin.[1] In Malory, and in the French prose romances of "Launcelot du Lac" and the "Saint Grael," they are father and son. In the refined version of Tennyson it would hardly have been possible to admit this relation, yet it adds a peculiar interest and pathos to some of the scenes in that quest of the Holy Grail in which from motives so dissimilar they both engaged. For example, Malory tells us how once, during that fateful year of the quest, they met on board the ship which was conveying to their last rest

[1] Yet G. S. Stuart Glennie, in his fascinating "Essay on the Arthurian Localities" prefixed to the republication by the Early English Test Society of the incomplete "Romance of Merlin," quotes M. De La Villemarqúe as pleading for the Scottish origin of Launcelot himself: — "Les plus anciens manuscrits portent souvent *Ancelot*. . . . ancel, en langue romane signifie *servant*, et ancelot est son diminutif. Si, par hasard, Ancelot était la traduction du nom d'un personnage gallois, dont l'histoire s'accorderait en tout point avec le roman. Eh bien, c'est ce que je crois avoir decouvert. On trouve, en effet, dans les traditions celtiques un chef dont le nom *Mael* (*serviteur*) répond exactement à celui *d'Ancelot* et à qui les anciens bardes, les triades, les chroniques, les légendes, et toutes les autorités armoricaines, galloises, ou étrangères prêtent les mêmes traits, le même caractère, les mêmes mœurs, les mêmes aventures, qu'au héros du roman français." "And if," adds Mr. Stuart Glennie, "we accept this identification, then Launcelot as well as Mordred belongs to Scotland."

the remains of Percivale's holy sister. It was just before Sir Launcelot had the veiled vision which taught him that his own quest was vain, in an interval of his so-called madness, when he was enjoying a great but transitory peace of mind.

"'Ah,' said Sir Launcelot, 'are ye Galahad?' 'Yea, forsooth,' said he. And so he kneeled down and asked him his blessing, and after took off his helm and kissed him. And there was great joy between them, for there is no tongue can tell the joy that they made either of other, and many a friendly word spoken between as kind would, the which is no need here to be rehearsed. And there every each told other of their adventures and marvels that were befallen to them in many journeys sith that they departed from the court. . . . So dwelled Launcelot and Galahad within that ship half a year, and served God daily and nightly with all their power. . . . Then came to the ship a knight armed all in white, and saluted the two knights on the high Lord's behalf, and said, 'Galahad, sir, ye have been long enough with your father; come out of the ship and go where the adven-

tures shall lead thee in quest of the Sancgreal.' Then he went to his father and kissed him sweetly, and said, 'Fair, sweet father, I wot not when I shall see you more till I see the body of Jesu Christ.' 'I pray you,' said Launcelot, 'pray ye to the high Father that He hold me in his service.' And so he took his horse, and there they heard a voice that said, 'Think to do well, for the one shall never see the other before the dreadful day of doom.' 'Now, son Galahad,' said Launcelot, 'since we shall depart, and never see other, I pray to the high Father to preserve both me and you both.' 'Sir,' said Galahad, 'no prayer availeth so much as yours!'"

Galahad's death occurred shortly after, and Launcelot was never again at ease in his sin. The mighty struggles of this great and tender soul with the guilt that was crushing it are plainly foreshadowed in Malory; but of course they do not receive any thing like the searching examination with which he is made in Tennyson to face his own "remorseful pain" at the close of the thrilling episode of Elaine of Astolat; although otherwise, in this episode, Tenny-

son follows Malory with unusual closeness. The cruel reaction of Launcelot's divided loyalties, the deep "dishonor in which his heart's honor was really rooted," are set in stronger light than ever in Tennyson's last edition in two interpolated passages of such unusual beauty and significance that we make room for them, — our last quotations from the "Idyls" here. The first occurs on the threshold of the story, before Launcelot had sought and brought Guinevere to be Arthur's wife, — which, by the way, in Malory, he does not do, — when Arthur had finally broken the might of the last insurgent army: —

"Then, before a voice
As dreadful as the shout of one who sees
To one who sins, and deems himself alone
And all the world asleep, they swerved and brake,
Flying; and Arthur called to stay the brands
That hacked among the flyers. 'Ho! They yield!'
So, like a painted battle, the war stood
Silenced, the living quiet as the dead;
And in the heart of Arthur joy was lord.
He laughed upon his warrior whom he loved
And honored most: 'Thou dost not doubt me king,
So well thine arm hath wrought for me to-day.'
'Sir and my liege,' he cried, 'the fire of God
Descends upon thee in the battle-field;

I know thee for my king!' Whereat, the two
Sware, on the field of death, a deathless love.
And Arthur said, 'Man's word is God in man;
Let chance what will, I trust thee to the death.'"

And the second is after the final parting of the king and Guinevere:—

"On their march to westward, Bedivere,
Who slowly paced among the slumbering host,
Heard, in his tent, the moanings of the king:
'I found Him in the shining of the stars,
I marked him in the flowering of His fields,
But in His ways with men I find him not.
I waged His wars, and now I pass and die.
Oh, me! for why is all around us here
As if some lesser god had made the world,
But had not force to shape it as he would
Till the High God behold it from beyond,
And enter in and make it beautiful?
Or else, as if the world were wholly fair,
But that these eyes of men are dense and dim,
And have not power to see it as it is?
Perchance, because we see not to the close:
For I, being simple, thought to work His will,
And have but stricken with the sword in vain,
And all whereon I leaned, in wife and friend,
Is traitor to my peace; and all my realm
Reels back into the beast and is no more.
My God, Thou hast forgotten me in my death!
Nay, God, my Christ, I pass, but shall not die.'"

So the king goes away into the mist and darkness of that "last dim, weird battle in the west,"—a marvellous picture in its wintry tints of white and monotonous gray, indelibly drawn on the memory of the present generation. And this, with Tennyson, is the end. But here, at last, we venture to think that the poet's art has overreached itself, and that his *finale*, fine and imaginative though it be, is less impressive than that of the simple old master. It seems impossible to read the "Idyls" in their connection, and to go directly from "Guinevere" to the "Passing of Arthur,"—from the verity, solemnity, and intense humanity of the former, and the extraordinary moral elevation which it induces, to the mists and portents and fairy uncertainties of the latter,—without experiencing a painful shock and chill. The two poems, both so beautiful, belong to different spheres. There is a life-time, a spiritual revolution, between the two. Malory's story and that of his "French book" by no means end with the battle. Is it possible that the absent twelfth book of Tennyson's epic was to have related these subsequent incidents?

At all events, Malory's ending is realistic and credible, — sad, but satisfying. On the morning after Sir Bedivere had seen, as in a dream, the king conveyed away, he came in a maze of grief and weariness to a chapel, where he heard of a hurried funeral which had taken place there the midnight before. Certain weeping ladies had brought to this humble hermitage a stately corpse, and prayed for its sepulture. "Alas," cried Sir Bedivere, "that was my Lord Arthur, and there he lies." And Sir Bedivere straightway vowed to live always in that hermitage and pray for Arthur's soul. But when the tidings of Arthur's death had travelled over seas, Launcelot arose in despair, and, returning to England, prayed for a last interview with Guinevere. It was granted, and they met in the cloister of her convent, and in the presence of her nuns.

"Then she said to all her ladies, 'Through this man and me hath all this war been wrought, and the death of the most noblest knights of the world; for through our love that we have loved together is my most noble lord slain. Therefore, Sir Launcelot, wit thou well, I am set in such a plight to get my soul's health; and yet

I trust, through God's grace, that after my death, to have a sight of the blessed face of Christ, and at doomsday to sit on His right side; for as sinful as ever I was are saints in heaven. Therefore, Sir Launcelot, I require thee and beseech thee heartily, for all the love that ever was betwixt us, that thou never see me more in the visage; and I command thee, on God's behalf, that thou forsake my company, and to thy kingdom thou turn again, and keep well thy realm from war and wrack. For, as well as I have loved thee, my heart will not serve me to see thee: for through thee and me is the flower of kings and knights destroyed. Therefore, Sir Launcelot, go to thine own realm, and there take thee a wife, and live with her with joy and bliss: and I pray thee heartily, pray for me to our Lord that I may amend my misliving.' 'Now, sweet madam,' said Sir Launcelot, 'would ye that I should return again to my country, and there wed a lady? Nay, madam, wit you well that shall I never do; for I shall never be so false to you of that I have promised: but the same destiny that ye have taken you to, I will take me unto, for to please Jesu; and ever for

you I cast me specially to pray. . . . I insure you faithfully, I will ever take me to penance, and pray while my life lasteth, if that I may find any hermit, either gray or white, that will receive me. Wherefore, madam, I pray you kiss me, and never no more.' 'Nay,' said the queen, 'that shall I never do; but abstain you from such works.' And they departed. But there was never so hard an hearted man but he would have wept to see the dolor that they made."

In all this there is a grave and simple fitness to the inalienable majesty of the guilty pair. They never met again; but six years later, after long prayer and penance, there came to Launcelot, one night, a vision, warning him to seek once more the convent at Almesbury, where he would find Guinevere dead; and to see that she was buried beside her lord, King Arthur.

"Then Sir Launcelot rose up or day, and told the hermit. 'It were well done,' said the hermit, 'that ye made you ready, and that ye disobey not the vision.' Then Sir Launcelot took seven followers with him; and, on foot, they went from Glastonbury to Almesbury, the

which is little more than thirty miles. And thither they came within two days, for they were weak and feeble to go. And when Sir Launcelot was come to Almesbury, within the nunnery, Queen Guinevere died but half an hour before. And the ladies told Sir Launcelot that Queen Guinevere told them all, or she passed, that Sir Launcelot had been priest near a twelvemonth. 'And hither he cometh, as fast as he may, to fetch my corpse; and beside my lord, King Arthur, he shall bury me.' Wherefore the queen said, in hearing of them all, 'I beseech Almighty God, that I may never have power to see Sir Launcelot with my worldly eyes.' 'And thus,' said all the ladies, 'was ever her prayer, these two days, till she was dead.' Then Sir Launcelot saw her visage, but he wept not greatly, but sighed."

The "Idyls" themselves contain no touch finer than this last. Sir Launcelot's own release was not long delayed, — "For he did never after eat but little meat, nor drank; and evermore, night and day, he prayed, but sometime slumbered a broken sleep; and ever he was lying grovelling on the tomb of Arthur and Guinevere."

His brethren remonstrated with him for his despair, but his answer was simple: "'When I remember me how, by my default, mine orgule, and my pride, that they were both laid full low, that were peerless that ever was living of Christian people, wit you well,' said Sir Launcelot, 'this remembered of their kindness and mine unkindness sank so to my heart, that I might not sustain myself.' So the French book maketh mention."

In six weeks, he also died. "Thou, Sir Launcelot," cried his brother, Sir Ector, as he stood by his wasted remains, "there thou liest, that were never matched of earthly knight's hand; and thou wert the courtiest knight that ever bare shield; and thou wert the truest friend to thy lover that ever bestrode horse; and thou wert the truest lover of a sinful man that ever loved woman; and thou wert the kindest man that ever strake with sword; and thou wert the goodliest person that ever came among press of knights; and thou wast the meekest man, and the gentlest, that ever ate in hall among ladies; and thou wert the sternest knight to thy mortal foe that ever put spear in the rest."

It is evident, that both Malory and the author of the "French book" believed far too sincerely in the reality of their characters, seriously to doubt that Arthur's mysterious evanishment was indeed death. However, Malory observes, that "some men yet say, in many parts of England, that Arthur is not dead, but had by the will of our Lord Jesu in another place. And men say that he shall come again, and he shall win the holy cross. I will not say it shall be so, but, rather, I will say, here in this world he changed his life. But many men say that there is written upon his tomb this verse: '*Hic jacet Arthurus, Rex quondam, Rexque futurus.*'"

May not the laureate have closed his tale with Arthur's mystic removal to Avallon, rather than with these last affecting incidents, — which undoubtedly confirm our human sympathy with the creatures from whom we are now loath to part, — by way of additional tribute to the character of the Prince Consort, who seemed to him "scarce other than his own ideal knight," as an unspoken professional intimation, that in him the fancy of the early ages had actually found its fulfilment?

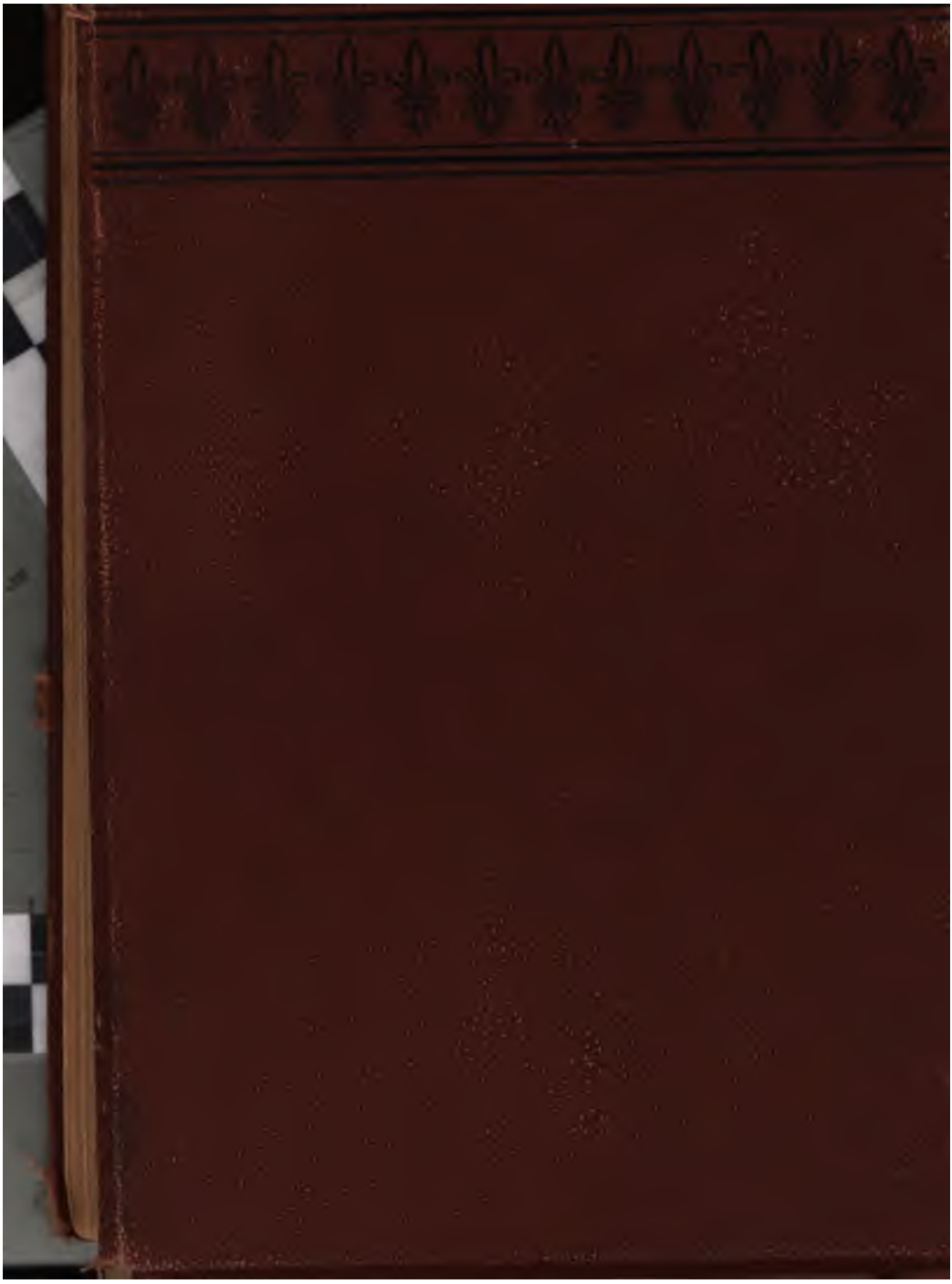
So much for the material out of which the great Victorian poet has constructed the frame of his most durable work. How entirely we owe to himself the spiritual unity and symmetry of it is too obvious for further remark. Yet, we are far from agreeing with those who think that he has defaced the *naïveté* of ancient story, by infusing into it a too modern scrupulousness. It is a question whether morality is ever modified by time so much as by those other influences, — clime and race. The endeavor to cast off the conscience which we know, and to substitute for it the supposed conscience which regulated a by-gone state of society, almost always fails deplorably, sometimes disgustingly. Thus, the "Defence of Guinevere," and the other Arthurian poems of William Morris, with all their melody and passion, barely escape repulsiveness; and, for a similar reason, the studies of Matthew Arnold, in the "Story of Tristram," though pretty, are, in their fancied reality, exquisitely unreal. It is the mistake of painting things preposterously, because they "seem so," which is the favorite foible of our generation, in more than one branch of art. Chivalry, the

motif of all mediæval romance, was the youngest dream concerning social relations of the modern world after its conversion to Christianity, — a part of the general ecstasy of its recent regeneration. It was the bright, audacious ideal of a love between mortal man and woman as wholly supersensual as the fabled love of the Redeemer for his bride, the church. The knight assumed, under the formal sanction of the church, a triple vow, which constituted his practical religion, — to serve his master Christ, to succor the defenceless, to love one woman, and her supremely. It seems not naturally to have occurred to the Latinized mind of Southern Europe to inquire, what woman? If, as indeed usually happened, she chanced to be the wife of another man, it was equal. The love of chivalry was a something which transcended all accidental relations and prudential arrangements. And the love which is so melodiously celebrated by the more refined of the southern troubadours is, in very truth, just such a sublimated sentiment. It is incapable of coarse offence. Natural jealousy cannot attain unto it. We may listen for hours to the echoes of those rapturous lyrics, and find them

always the same, — sweet, ardent, innocent because unmoral, — breathing an air of sunny license, awakening not the faintest vibration of the sense of right and wrong.

But the Trouvères and the minstrels were, for the most part, the descendants, or, at least, the near kindred, of those quaint barbarians of whom Tacitus wrote with languid wonder and approbation, "*Quanquam severa illic matrimonia nec ullam morum partem magis laudaveris.*" The theoretic lady-love of the Norman or Scandinavian knight could hardly be other than his wife, present or future. Behold an earnest restriction! The path of honor at once becomes narrow, strait, and difficult. All deviations from it are recognized as transgressions, all tragic results of such deviations as punishment. Where, as in the story of "Launcelot and Guinevere," there are struggles, remorse, and a piteous expiation, our keenest sympathies are, no doubt, demanded, and not vainly, for those who love and sin. But where, as in the story of "Tristram and Isolt," the constitutional instinct of chastity is unblushingly defied, the effect is one of extreme coarseness. Here is precisely the spirit of con-

scious and blasphemous brutality which M. Taine is always encountering amid his researches through our early literature, and which partly fascinates and partly horrifies, but always amazes, him. He barely recognizes the apparently irresistible truth, that the very impudence and desperation of the spirit in question argue the presence of a more tyrannous conscience than can be inferred from the milder and more graceful licentiousness of softer climes.

If there ever could have been a knightly Arthur, and he could ever have founded an ideal code and state, they may well have been essentially the code and state whose brief glory Tennyson has so splendidly portrayed. It was a sublime but very premature dream, the disappointment of which appeared inevitable, even in the days of Malory. Let us derive what consolation we may from the fact that it appears no more than probable in the days of Tennyson.

Cambridge: Press of John Wilson & Son.